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A
SHORT TOUR
IN THE
MIDLAND COUNTIES OF ENGLAND;
PERFORMED
IN THE SUMMER OF 1772.
TOGETHER WITH AN ACCOUNT OF A SIMILAR
EXCURSION,
UNDERTAKEN SEPTEMBER 1774.

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L O N D O N :

Printed by M. LEWIS, for the AUTHOR:
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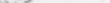
M.DCC.LXXV.

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REPORT

BRITISH

1903-04 2112



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such irrefragable evidence is placed upon his

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though not an agreeable reply, a less important

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notwithstanding it is continued, and is going

forward, is yet unwilling to be the follower of

untruth.

THE first of these tours having been
sent to the editor of a magazine, it has
accordingly appeared in that publication; but
Mr. Corrector, the manufacturer of the pe-
riodical work in question, having taken such
liberties with the author's performance as
scarcely to leave him the satisfaction of know-
ing his own meaning—induces a bad writer
once more to intrude himself on the public;
satisfied that though he can acquire no reputa-
tion by reprinting his futile observations, he

cannot lose any after having such language, such irreconcilable evidence fathered upon his pen as has hitherto disgraced it.

Besides,—as the piece has been honoured with much more attention (especially in a certain local situation) than could reasonably be expected, the author was desirous of making, though not an agreeable regale, a less soporific potion for the mental taste of his friends; and notwithstanding he is confessedly allied to ignorance, is yet unwilling to be the fosterer of untruth.

In regard to editors of public repositories of fugitive literature. It is evidently their province to preserve or reject such pieces as they imagine will gratify or disgust their readers; but I am far from positive that they have a right to make innovations on the expression of another, much less to pervert his meaning or put fresh sentiments into his mouth: however, if it were to be decreed that they really

are

are justifiable in altering, this indulgence would remain only as long as alteration and *improvement* were the same thing (for we have preceded authority enough to assert that they are *sometimes* very different indeed!). Not every one who attempts to write has genius to render him successful, nor have those who pretend to correct always ability for the undertaking. I am not qualified for an amender, nor am, Heaven be praised, a cobbler of the works of others; but were I *obliged* to revise the journal of a traveller for instance, I should be cautious how I advanced any thing with the least deviation from truth; I might perhaps, in such a case, be scrupulous of asserting that "we have more wool than we can *make up* in manufactures,"—and, without a total deprivation of memory, should hardly make the streets of a city *well-peopled* in one page, and instantly dispeople them in the next;—nor would I bestow the epithet of *wretched* on a village upon which reality and the writer had not dared a stigma:—if the buildings of a town were remarked as

good

good ones or neat, I should account it not very proper to say that "the church, *however*, is handsome"—any more than to induct so much modesty into my author as to force him to call his own remarks *curious*. Numberless incongruities like these, *which are to be met with*, would or ought to teach me to avoid faults of this nature ; if, through my inadvertancy, or that of the printer, any mistakes were found at last, I should not then, I hope, let pride so far obtain the ascendancy over my reason as to refuse a necessary reparation for the detriment, the subjoining a catalogue of such *errata*. Yet, be this as it may, such refusals have absolutely happened ; performances have been *corrected* whilst they became the distorted shadow of a shade, and, in consequence, writers have been injured and the public insulted.

— "What scribbling rage!

— "I've writ a volume for a page!

— "By Heav'n I do my spirit wrong,

"To grate this scrannel pipe so long :

"Hence! hence!—I hate its peevish tone,
 "Tho' aim'd at *pride* and *spleen* alone."—

Having in my late excursion retraced part of the former, I have been enabled to make several additions in that part of the pamphlet which is now printed a second time, and have introduced a few *real* corrections, though too true it is that many more are necessary; but the reader will not look for smoothness of period or flourish of rhetoric—where he is only to attend to strictness of veracity and plain matter of fact, nor will expect in the rude sketches of an inexperienced hand that nicety and elegance of execution which is observable in the finished works of a master.

The dimensions of remarkable buildings as they are commonly given being often very erroneous*, I have sometimes chosen to satisfy myself

* Of this take one instance. We have been told that the steeple at Boston is 300 feet high, of which the lanthorn
 is

myself in that particular; and will therefore undertake to answer for the accuracy of those interspersed in this account; excepting them that I did not measure, which have always some distinction, as, *is said, reputed, &c.*

is 18; whereas, 64 feet the latter, and 262 the whole, is the true altitude.

E R R A T A.

Page 3. Line 4th. Place a comma after "parts."

P. 15. For "Edward" read *Edred*.

25. Instead of a semi-colon, put a period after "Esq."

Ibid. For "still frequently" read—still *more* frequently.

26. L. 14. Dele *to*.

27. For "Fishest" read *Fishtoft*.

45. L. 14. Dele *of*.

67. Instead of "Further to the west of Grimsthorp, is the noble seat" read—Further to the west *is* Grimsthorp, the noble seat, &c.

84. For "of" read *of*.

SHORT TOUR, &c.

FROM the metropolis, proceeding towards Peterborough, we passed through Hodsdon and Hertford, pretty considerable well-built towns, especially the latter; and afterwards through Stevenage, Baldock, and a few other smaller places, in which the traveller will find little food for curiosity. The road, for about forty miles, afforded several prospects over a woody, cultivated country; some of them pleasing, but others, near town, hurt by too great a number of ordinary buildings.

The remaining part of the journey to Peterborough, through the counties of Bedford and Huntingdon, is along a tract all under culture; but too bare of wood, too little varied with inclosures

closures and striking objects, and too flat to be agreeable. I found nothing worthy notice before I reached Peterborough, without we except the Bishop of Lincoln's palace at Bugden, a very antique edifice, more singular than beautiful.

Peterborough is reckoned the smallest city in England, and is but indifferently built. We enter the town by a wooden bridge over the Nen, no unimportant river, the extent of its navigation considered. The only building worth visiting is the Minster, a noble Gothic structure; the west front exceedingly rich in embellishments, and is generally much admired: however, the whole stands in need of considerable repairs, which, it seems, without some unexpected benefaction for that purpose, is not likely to be hastily undertaken: within, a painting of one Scarlet, once a sexton here, yet remains; him who lived to bury two queens, and all the housekeepers of the place for two generations. Besides the cathedral, there is in Peterborough one parish church.

From this city I travelled over a flat country to Bourn, passing, in my way, through Deeping, an inconsiderable market-town. Bourn is
also

also a small place, but its neighbourhood very populous, and therefore the market much frequented. Here is one of the finest springs in these parts called Bourn-well-head; concerning the depth of which some credulous people give wonderful accounts; but others, who appear to have reason on their side, say, that had one opportunity to make a trial, the unfathomable abyss would be found to exist only in the imagination.

By this fountain is a piece of ground of a square form, inclosed with a vast moat, and trenches on the outer side towards the north and west; these are the vestiges of a castle; and one of its watch-towers, of an extraordinary thickness, was remaining in part not above thirty years ago; but whether the fortress was really built by the Saxon Edmund II. is not quite agreed upon by historians.

Continuing my tour along the edge of the hills towards Donington, I passed near Sempringham church, which has not one house left within almost a mile of it, though undoubtedly once adjacent to a considerable village with a very large seat; but the parish is more remarkable for being the spot that gave rise to a sect of

religious, called Gilbertines, from the name of the founder, or (from that of the place) the Sempringham order ; this monastery is quite destroyed *. The road from Peterborough hither lay over an useful dry country, but that part of it from this place to Donington, which lies through the fens, was in rainy seasons nearly impassable ; till, a dozen years or more since, a firm broad rampart was made upon it, known by the name of Bridgend-causeway ; this useful improvement has been continued by a turnpike, and the whole, as well as most of the fen roads, is now equally safe and expeditious for travellers with the roads in any other part of the kingdom. The fens just mentioned used to present as disgusting a view of mud, weeds, &c. as the worst in this country ; but were inclosed some time since the year 1764, are intersected in part by quickset-hedges, and now appear in one continued field of oats : a pleasing contrast to their former condition !

Donington and Swineshead are both trifling and ill-built. In the neighbouring country, and also about Spalding, much hemp and flax is produced ; but, bringing less profit to the

* The priory built, and its new mode of life instituted, by Sir Gilbert de Sempringham, 1139.

cultivators than they did formerly, the growth of these commodities has been on the decline for several years.

The road from Swinehead to Boston, is over part of a very extensive fen, some of it already cultivated; the remainder expected to be inclosed in a short time.

Boston is a considerable, well-built, and well-paved town, with a very spacious (though not a strictly regular) market-place: in the center of this is a noble butter-cross on arches and columns; the apartment on the first floor used as an assembly-room. At one end of the market-place is another building, being a flat roof supported by wooden pillars, and appropriated to the sale of corn; also a compact butchery. The town is lately much improved by many new buildings, particularly by a regular pile at the south end of the market-place, just finished; this piece of architecture is in a neat pleasing taste; in the center of the front a pediment, enriched with the corporation arms in sculpture. The middle of the ground-floor is occupied by a very convenient fish-market. The principal curiosity, however, in this town,

is

is its fine Gothic church *, accounted the largest in Europe without cross-aisles; the steeple no less than 262 feet from the ground; the tower being 198 feet, and a beautiful octagonal finishing upon it, called the lantern, joined by light arches to four conic turrets which rise from the corners, 64, including the termination in eight ornamented pinnacles, the basis of the iron ones. The masonry of the whole is rich, the architecture light, yet magnificent: it contains eight uncommonly tuneable bells, chimes, and a large loud clock with figures that strike the quarters. Here are also several meeting-houses, one of which, for the Anabaptists, built by Mr. John Saul in 1766, is a very neat edifice. By an act passed in the reign of Queen Anne, the town "was supplied with water from a pond in the west fen, by means of an engine and pipes"; but the water being far from excellent, the works were neglected, and the inhabitants have since had recourse to pumps and cisterns.

The river Witham, till very lately, had not for some time been navigable to Boston for vessels of more than 70 or 80 tons, and these only

* The first stone of which was laid on the Monday next after the feast of St. John the Baptist, in the year 1309, (the third of Edward II.)

in spring-tides; at present it is so effectually scoured out by the back water, that ships of very considerable burthen may sail up with ease; nevertheless, those larger than seven or eight score tons seldom come nearer than four miles: rather chusing on account of a saving in pilotage, &c. to lie at the Scolf, situated at the mouths of the Witham and Welland; from that station the cargoes are conveyed in decked barges to Boston or Spalding. The Witham, till within the last forty years, admitted sizeable vessels as far as Lincoln, without any assistance from art; but the inhabitants of this country trusting to the specious promises of a land-owner †, inadvertantly permitted him to place a tunnel in a manner highly prejudicial to the channel, and the river, in a short time was ruined thereby; being so choaked with sand for several miles (as far as the tide flowed) above Boston, that the level of it now is much higher than the

† The then L—d F—w—m. He was to build a gowt, &c. in retaliation for their compliance with his request, and actually made a feint as if he intended to fulfil the agreement, by causing bricks, &c. to be brought to the place of erection, but the obligatory writing not being forthcoming, (for which a pretty good reason might be assigned) he desisted from the purpose, the materials were carried back, and the deluded Bostonians left to lament their own folly, and the p——r's ingratitude.

adjacent

adjacent country. As this river was not only useful in a commercial view, but also as being the chief or leading drain of North-Holland, the loss of it was a general misfortune, and one that abundantly required a remedy: accordingly, some years ago, the inhabitants of Boston and other persons interested in the project, made application to parliament, and having procured an act, empowering them to cut a new river across the fens, and to connect it with, and cleanse the still remaining part of the old one, so as that the same should be rendered navigable to Lincoln;—the work was carried into execution, and, being compleated in autumn, 1766, has since been found to answer all the purposes for which it was intended, admirably well. This new cut is, perhaps, the noblest canal (of its length) in the kingdom; it is 80 feet broad at top, about 60 at bottom, and ten feet deep; with a fore-land of near fifty feet on each side, and very large, substantial banks, finely sloped in the form of a terrace: but the most striking object in the whole undertaking is the “grand sluice,” situated at the mouth of the new cut, where it disembogues its waters into the old river, at a small distance above Boston church. As some of my readers may be curious to know the dimensions of an erection reputedly superior
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in size to every thing of the kind in England, I have given an exact table of the admeasurements in a note below*. It is founded on an immense number of piles, pointed with iron; the whole building of brick, made of the clay dug out of the work, excepting the corners of the piers and their horizontal surfaces, which are composed of Portland stones, strongly cramped:

	Feet	Inches
* Breadth of the three common water-ways, on that side of the bridge next the haven—each	20	10
Ditto of the lock—ditto	17	10
Ditto of ditto, on the land-side	15	3
Ditto of the three former, on ditto	19	7
Ditto of the two piers between the water-ways, same side	13	6
Greatest breadth (it being on this side irregular) of that next the lock—ditto	21	6
Breadth of ditto—sea-side	19	2
Ditto of the two others—ditto	10	6
Length of every pier on that side, and of two piers on the land-side—each	31	4
Ditto of the lock-pier, same side	88	7
Breadth of the bridge, including the walls, (which, added to the other dimensions, gives the total length of the piers)	16	9
Length of two piers from end to end	79	5
Ditto of that next the lock	105	4
Breadth of three arches—each	17	2
Ditto of that over the lock	15	5

over it is a disagreeable bridge of four arches. Besides this sluice, there is (among many other smaller in the neighbourhood) another at the south entrance of the town, a very fine one, though vastly inferior to the former; there is also a new cut from this last, which extends to Bourn, and is, for several miles, of noble dimensions.

As I have had occasion to speak so much upon the subject of drainage, &c. I must beg leave to digress a moment, in order to call the reader's attention to the many public-spirited undertakings of this country. Indeed, the innumerable drains, rivers, artificial banks, sluices, bridges, water-engines †, &c. together with the strict attention usually paid to the preservation of these works, and the keeping them in order, —all this, with the number of the turnpike roads, conspires to raise in the traveller a very lofty idea of the opulence and industry of the inhabitants: but a stranger will receive additional pleasure from an assurance that the vast expences which must necessarily be incurred by these works, are repaid by a proportionate de-

† Turned by the wind, and in shape much like those corn-mills that are boarded down to a broad base at bottom.

gree of advantage, as well as temporary convenience to the country; for, by the proper application of them, the fens (a tract of as luxuriant soil as most land in Europe) are kept dry, and thereby have hitherto served for pasturage to an incredible number of sheep and other cattle; but again, as the greatest part of these low lands will soon be formed into inclosures, those inclosures could not subsist to any profit without such bold exertions after improvement.

As to the partition of these commons, which has unhappily been the occasion of many riotous proceedings, it must, I think, be of general use to the nation, though we may well enough account for the contention by its acknowledged hurtfulness to a few individuals: but indeed, was the interest of every person to be considered singly, nothing of importance could ever be resolved on. Thus, by making a navigation, you turn the people who were employed in land-carriage out of business;—by erecting a pier, or opening a harbour in a new situation, the trade of a neighbouring town is destroyed;—by forming one road, you are detrimental to the inn-keepers on another: in short, projects of human invention, that have for their object the good of the whole, cannot attain perfection

without injury to a part. Notwithstanding this, the partial disadvantage that attends every exertion for public emolument ought not to encourage us to condemn such attempts too hastily; let us first bring up the evidence on both sides, weigh the good against the evil, and then determine the cause, by observing which side preponderates. For instance, if by inclosing the fens we deprive a number of cottagers of pasturage for their stock, and, by that means, of the method whereby to procure sustenance for themselves,—the scheme is so far a bad one;—but, on the other hand, if by so doing we only change the occupation of these people into a more industrious way of life, by promoting cultivation, encouraging those who are possessed of a little money to hire small farms on their own account, and by paying the poorer people more for their labour than they could possibly obtain by the profit of grazing a few sheep (especially considering the frequency of the rot in low lands); if, besides, we provide employment for many new-comers,—promote population,—increase our product,—augment our trade,—enrich and strengthen our country,—for these are consequences that follow in progression;—surely, when all these advantages, which appear likely to be realized in the present case, are placed in the

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the scale against supporting in idleness a parcel of inactive families, no impartial man can hesitate which to prefer,—inclosing and improving fens and wastes, or suffering them to remain in a comparatively, unprofitable state.—But to return :

Boston, upon the whole, though not a town that can with propriety be denominated *very* large, is a thriving place, wearing the appearance of business, and, on account of its church, large sluice, &c. is not unworthy a traveller's notice : the few ships belonging to this port are employed on voyages to Norway and the Baltic; the sloops, (40 to 90 tons each) in carrying oats to London, and I may add, this trade being much on the increase, several additional granaries are erecting purposely for this article : great quantities of sea-coals are brought in here, and much raff imported; the exports, nothing. Here is also a fishery, though but inconsiderable, employing only about a dozen little sloops in catching soles, plaise, thornbacks, and other small fish in the neighbouring bay. The markets in the spring for live cattle are the largest in this part of the kingdom.

The country round Boston is incomparably rich grazing-land; the corn that is grown there

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(excepting oats) being but trifling. In tillage they use two horses to a plough. In proportion as inclosing has become prevalent in the fens, the breeding of geese, and the business of catching wild-fowl, has diminished.

Whilst I continued in this country, I made an excursion southerly, and first visited Spalding, a tolerably large town, the central part of which, around the market-place, &c. is very well-built, and the houses slated; but the remainder, in general, are straggling streets, indifferently paved. The Welland, though for some miles so narrow as to obstruct the land-floods, and then immediately opening to a vast width, equally inconvenient by reason of its shoals, is of much use to this town; barges cannot get up, however, except in spring-tides*. The church is large, but (so far from being handsome, as the ingenious and seldom-mistaken Mr. Pennant tells us, that I am rather inclined to call it an ugly old building) composed of very bad stone, but is decorated with a remarkably fine chandelier, of brass gilt. The town is disagreeably situated,

* Our hackneyed accounts, that say this river "almost surrounds" Spalding, are mistaken; its course is nearly straight through it.

about a mile from the fens, which hereabouts are mostly under water, insomuch that a turnpike, made a few years since, to Peterborough, by Deeping, is entirely ruined by the floods; a new one is however begun, which will be carried round by Crowland. Spalding has now no other remains of its abbey† than part of a stone-arch, joined to a dwelling-house, in a place called the Gore. Here are some alms-houses, lately rebuilt, and a very great market for hemp and flax. The environs of the town are chiefly gardeners grounds.

About nine miles from Spalding is Crowland, formerly much noted for its abbey‡, of which there are large and magnificent ruins now standing. The well-known triangular bridge at this town is another curiosity, an instance, however, of absurd ostentation; for, on account of the mere matter of being singular, the builder has erected a structure without ornament or use, the

† It arose in process of time to that dignity, though originally instituted as a small priory, by Thorold de Bukenhale, 1052.

‡ First erected by Ethelbald, king of Mercia; burnt by the Danes in 870; rebuilt by Edward in 948.

peaked steepness preventing any but foot-passengers from crossing it; accordingly, the road for horsemen lies underneath; but, nevertheless, for its great antiquity, durability, and oddity, it deserves attention. Upon this bridge is a wretched figure of King Ethelbald. The situation of Crowland, though now retaining but few of the peculiarities which, too lately, have been attributed to it, is yet the most detestable that the imagination can figure to itself,—almost surrounded by immense stagnated pools, a low fen covered with flags and water-weeds, and affording a dreary unenlivened prospect, varied by no trees, or (what are worse than none) only willows,—the whole heightened by a never-ceasing discordant chorus of frogs, geese, and fen-fowls; these supply the absence of the warblers of the grove, whilst the stench of the mud is substituted for the sweet invigorating air.

Before I leave this part of the fens I should premise that the soil round Crowland* and Spalding, though good, is inferior to the neighbourhood of Boston.

Near

* The bridge, at this place (before mentioned) is built across an inconsiderable muddy drain, not "over the Welland," as many books pretend; it is also situated *entirely* in Lincolnshire, *not* "in three counties."

Other

Near Crowland is Thorney, where was another abbey; the church, said to be that which belonged to the monastery, is still in good repair; there is, however, little striking in the building, except a row of statues in a niche near the top of the steeple. The town has a most diminutive market.

I will now proceed to a recital of the remarks that I made upon a few curiosities or places, viewed in the northern parts of Lincolnshire.

Twelve miles N. W. of Boston, lies Tatterhal, a market-town containing few more than

Other things worth noting are, that there are now no "remains of St. Guthlake's cottage;"—nor do the inhabitants "pay a sum for the liberty of fishing, &c. in the neighbouring fens;"—neither are the roads hither "impassable for carriages," though it must be owned that the conveniency of boats for the conveyance of bulky goods is more attended to; but the new turnpike, by making a way easier of access, will, undoubtedly, create great alterations here. The willows which grew on the sides of the drains in some streets of this little dirty town have been cut down several years.

The above assertions, which our compiling description-writers (who, like the merry quack, *travel much at home*) have so long copied from each other, are so different from truth, or so much out of date, that it is become necessary to contradict them.

twenty houses, on a small river called the Bane, which falls a little below into the Witham. The church is a very large edifice, much out of repair, and the choir-windows destitute of glass †; but an object most worth notice is the castle; a venerable proof of ancient industry. The foundations of the walls and outer buildings are plainly to be discovered; the more visible part of these being only a piece of wall that now forms the back of a stable, and was evidently once joined to the main edifice, still entire. It is a vast structure of brick, nearly square, with a great angular projection or turret, continued from the foundation to some height above the roof, at the corners, each being terminated by a small eight-sided pyramid, composed of timber, covered with lead, and exceedingly decayed. The

† This deficiency is the consequence of the following affair. Lord Fortescue, as proprietor of the parish and church, had certainly a right to take away the painted glass that adorned this choir; yet, through politeness, declined doing it until he had called a meeting (about 18 years ago) and obtained the universal consent of the inhabitants for that purpose; but, though he had promised to re-furnish the windows with crown-glass, two publicans, upon the arrival of his servants to take it down, behaved in a riotous abusive manner, which so incensed his lordship, that he hastened to fulfil his intention, by sending the glass as a present to the earl of Exeter, and revenged himself by making no return.

building

building to the battlements is 96; and to the top of the turrets 110 feet from the ground, exclusive of the wooden pyramids: the walls are $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick as far as the second story, but on the inside diminish somewhat at every floor, as well to lessen the ponderous weight of the upper part, as to serve for a rest or support to the beams: this amazing thickness is not, however, to be understood as all over entirely solid, because vaulted spaces or little rooms are found in the midst, in different places; some of them now used for granaries, &c. and one long cavity, about six feet wide, forms a singular habitation for a labouring family. The roof and floors of this castle are gone, but four stone chimney-pieces remain, richly ornamented with carved arms of the noble families in whose possession the fortress has formerly been: the arches of some of the uppermost windows are also curiously enriched, being overspread with numerous intersecting ribs of brick, the lesser filling up the compartments formed by the greater, and so proceeding in a gradual diminution of size, till they would be no longer distinct: such minute work in this material is really curious. The stair-case is a very fine pleasant one, all of stone, with a moulding of the same for a hold-fast: the interior of the castle at bottom is 38 feet long

by 22 broad; the upper floors from what has been said will be adjudged a trifle larger: underneath are vaults, whose walls are not only yet more substantial, but their arched roofs (as I was assured from the testimony of some military gentlemen) bomb-proof. The moat is in good condition, being neatly faced with brick; on that side next the town was another, meant, perhaps, as an outwork to defend the gate.

At Kirkstead, near Tattershal, was a Cistercian abbey†, of which a gable-end is now standing.

In the road to Horncastle you pass within two miles of another antiquity, a slender angular tower in a ruinous condition, called "Tower of Moor," a modern appellation, perhaps from its situation on a moor; for, the original name is equally unknown with the use or intention; upon this different speculations have been advanced, but all inconclusive.

The moor on which this building is situated, with other spots on the southern extremity of the Wolds, but more especially Friskney fen, and a few others near Wainfleet, produces cran-

† Founded by Hugh Brito, the son of Eudo, lord of Tattershal, 1139.

berries;

berries ; these the poor people gather, and have sold them within the last twenty years for as different prices as from ten-pence to six and six-pence a peck, partly from their being at first little known, and partly from the encreasing luxury of the age. The price now is four and six-pence.

Horncastle is a compact, thriving town, situated also on the banks of the Bane, and formerly defended by strong fortifications, of which some foundations, with a very few more apparent vestiges remain. The country for about six miles round the town is extremely populous, the land mostly arable, but an inclosure of several of the fields having lately taken place, its attendant consequence has begun to operate, for the whole parish of Lower Tointon is monopolized by two people ; — — but, indeed, there is no end of multiplying instances of this sort, which now abound every where, which must abound, as long as popular writers—those to whom an extraordinary share of talents was given to instruct, mislead mankind, by assuring them that the evident causes of depopulation, “ such as engrossing farms, inclosures, laying arable to grass, high prices of provisions, great cities, luxury, celibacy, debauchery, wars, nay even
emi-

emigrations, may (in regard to population) be very safely resolved into a string of vulgar errors *."—After having pretended to *demonstrate* this, what may not such self-sufficient propagators of absurdity next undertake to prove !

Proceeding northerly, I passed through the village of Bamber, where there is a new church, a plain neat edifice, built of red (or polished) brick, with a tower of the same. Three or four miles further lies Stanton, which had a weekly market and one fair; but the latter was lately transferred to the town of Horncastle, on receipt of the sum of two hundred pounds.

After travelling about an hour and half from Bamber, I came to a mean public-house, dignified with the title of Tibb's-inn, from whence to Castor, though nine or ten miles, there is not one house near the road, the greatest part of which, indeed, lies over barren heaths, lately improved with, here and there, some new inclosures.

Castor is a small, but neat market-town: the road hither from Tattershal, and so on almost to

* Young's Political Arithmetic.

the Humber, lies along that district called the Wolds, the southern part of which is an agreeable country, full of villages, and almost all in occupation; but towards the north degenerates into a barren, thinly peopled tract, bare of wood, and much of it uncultivated: through the whole, I observed some of the husbandmen ploughing with oxen, but more with horses.

Near Castor is another little town, called Market-Rasen; the Ankam, a large brook, runs through it, and serves to turn a mill or two†: the country about this place is far from being either populous or pleasing.

At Teleby, near Rasen, is a paper-mill, which, with another near Sleaford, are all that, I believe, are to be found in this large county.

To the east of Rasen is Louth; a town rather considerable than otherwise, handsome, and thriving; one of the gayest in Lincolnshire; there being here not only frequent assemblies and con-

† This river has lately been made navigable for sloops of fifty tons to Glandford-bridge, a brisk market-town; and for boats as high as Bishop-bridge, a village between that place and Rasen.

certs but even masquerades. The church is handsome, and its spire steeple very lofty †. At Louth is also a free-school, town-hall, &c. but what will afford more pleasure to the traveller fond of modern improvements is the new navigation from this place to the sea at Tetney creek; its length is about eight miles, part, a canal on a new course, and part formed by enlarging the Lud, a large brook that ran through the town; and, as the ground on which it was made was not perfectly level, a proper depth or equality of water was obtained by means of eight locks: the work was begun in 1763, and has turned to a beneficial account by reducing the price of coals, &c.

Returning southerly, we next arrive at Spilby, an ordinary market-town: from this place to Boston is a new turnpike road, a great improvement, as the road in its former state was almost impassable.

† According to a drawing, done by William Atkinson, surveyor, in 1753, it is, from the foundation to the top of the spire, 288 feet: but still this does not give the *perceivable* height, for who knows the depth of the foundation below the surface of the earth?

On

On leaving Spilsby, you soon come to the spot where stood Eresby-hall, an excellent house belonging to the duke of Ancafter; but being burnt down five or six years ago, his grace has not thought fit to rebuild it.

Further on, you pass over the parish of Keale, in which many fields are planted with potatoes: a pretty large quantity of these roots, brought from this village and other places in the country, are shipped at Boston. Near this place is Bullinbroke, worth mentioning only for being the birth-place of Henry the fourth; as the neighbouring village of Revelby was of our great philosophical naturalist and circumnavigator, Joseph Banks, Esq;

Still further, the road leads across a corner of the East fen, where was lately taken-in some inclosures, now again laid open on account of a disputed title to the right of possession; but I note them because, in digging the ditches, large trees were found, at a considerable depth beneath the surface, perfectly sound. A similar proof of a change in the face of the country is often met with in a fen near Peterborough, and still frequently in that of Anwick near Sleaford.

And here, having concluded the observations on this part of my travels, I will just stop a moment to take a retrospective view of (Holland or) the flat country, observed in the gr^oss. Throughout the whole the walls of the houses are commonly brick, but those of not a few of the meaner sort composed of mud; the roofs covered with tile, slate, or reed; a stone house is scarcely to be seen in the whole district, nor not many thatched with straw. However, this method of building is common to most flat countries; for where stone or other materials cannot be had but by a considerable length of removal, we may naturally to suppose that other resources would be sought and applied to; and it is not improbable that the want of quarries was the first incentive towards the attempt of hardening clay, so as that it might become a succadaneum for a better substance which could not conveniently be procured.—The structure of the churches here is more local, being universally spacious, and several of them built with most excellent stone, which, as Mr. Pennant observes, must have been brought from distant quarries, but he might have remarked, from a far greater distance than “twenty miles,” as there is no stone within a bigger circuit comparable to what is found in some of these ancient edifices. A few of them
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deserve a sepearte mention : that of Fishoft, near Boston, is equal to any in point of good materials ; it is supposed to have been built by an abbot of the monastery at Crowland, who has placed a statue of his tutelur saint, Guthlake, in a niche at the west end of the steeple : this church is plain, capacious, and lately fitted up with new pews, but is remarkable for nothing else, except a singularity in the pillars ; the semicolumns, four of which composes each pillar, have all unornamented capitals in the Gothic taste ; but while the capitals of those on one side the church are round, those on the opposite row are octagonal, though the supports themselves are strictly uniform : this difference seems to indicate that, in building, the taste of the less refined architects among our forefathers was somewhat similar to the fancy of these days in gardening ; the study and aim of both being an irregular variety. The rude industry of Gothic ages has often been sedulous in cramping execution, and involving it in intricacy ;—the laxity of modern perseverance, on the contrary, more happily delights in unfettering the violated scenes of nature. Once, art was admired only as it deviated from the path of simplicity ; now, it is no longer respected than in the company of its superior.

—The steeples of Surfleet and Pinchbeck churches, near Spalding, are particular for deviating considerably from a perpendicular, but they have been in this state so long a time that the likelihood of their falling is little apprehended : their reclining posture is the natural effect of a swampy soil, added, perhaps, to a want of due care in laying the foundations. The churches at Alderkirk and Kirton are built like cathedrals, having cross-aisles, and a tower in the middle ; the latter, especially, is a very large, noble structure, but is dangerously out of repair, and some of the side-walls, like the steeples already mentioned, also recline a little.—All that I have further to add in this general remark is some additional evidence to the observation that considerable tracts in this country were formerly gained from the sea (besides a narrow border in modern ages), as is proved by the vast entire banks remaining, and the ancient salt-marshes, elevated by the settlings of the tide ; these are to be seen in many places, but no where more distinctly than in the parishes of Sutterton and Wigtoft, extending from the Welland, in a direction up the country, for five miles : in short, testimonies tending to confirm the justness of the supposition are numerous and convincing.

Leaving

Leaving this country finally, I proceeded westward. Between the seventh and eight mile-stones (from Boston) is a considerable tract of modern inclosures; among them are some in which woad is cultivated, and also a mill and other erections necessary to prepare it for sale. By the side of this plantation is a row of cottages, the dwelling of the people employed in the culture. There are more plantations of this dye lately established in the fens; and the same method, of settling the hands necessary to attend them upon the spot, prevails in all.

A little further begins Heckington fen, the most beautiful of all the improved ones; it has been wholly inclosed about half a score years, and like the rest, in its original state, was frequently much flooded. The view over this new colony is very pretty, every inclosure being surrounded by a quick-hedge, and there is the ornamental addition of some plantations of elm and firs,—at the same time the appearance of some new houses, and many large stacks of corn, &c. give a chearful idea of increasing popularity.

From the road, hereabouts, you see Kyme tower, a plain square building, to the right;
situated

situated at a village of the same name; but whether or not it was an appendage to the priory which formerly subsisted at that place, could not be learned from those people of whom I enquired*.

Between Kyme and Sleaford was another religious edifice, and the barn at Haverholmhuse still distinguishes the scite, as well as retains some of the windows, &c. of this Gilbertine nunnery†.

Heckington is a compact village, with some very good houses; its extensive field has lately been enclosed; and I may venture to pronounce

* There is also one called Kime's or Richmond (vulgarly Kime) tower, situated a mile from Boston, and one at that town named Botolph or Hussey tower. These buildings (inferior in size to the former) resemble each other; both are entire, the walls of brick, battlemented, and have a little turret at each angle of the roof; are exactly square, save that the stair-case makes, in each, an eight-sided projection at one corner, and also rises higher than the rest: It is most probable they were originally nothing more than gentlemen's houses, calculated, as was usual in old times, for a slight defence.

† Built by Alexander, bishop of Lincoln.

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this inclosure (like a thousand others) a very satire upon the judgment and patriotism of its promoters.—Every person who bestows a dispassionate thought on these matters must instantly discern the difference between inclosing waste lands and those *already* cultivated. In the former case, we necessarily subject part of the soil to tillage, employ our poor, at the same time increasing the quantity, and, by such increase, reducing the price of provisions : in proportion as we accomplish these good ends, we also the better enable our manufacturers to exceed their rivals, and to enter into competition with them in cheapness as well as quality at foreign markets : in short, every acre of land that is thus improved is an addition to the wealth and strength of the kingdom. Inclosing a wild useless ground is only another name for fixing a settlement in the most advantageous of all situations ; whose prosperity, instead of being the terror, is beneficial to its institutors ; but the partition of corn-fields can boast no such excellence : the land was before employed in culture, in the culture too of grain, at present the highest object of national concern ; and it will not affect our argument if the caviller reply, that “ what we lose in corn is made up to us in wool,” because we have already much more of the

the latter than we can vend in manufactures; and this overplus being clandestinely disposed of to our neighbours, who have a superiority over us in regard to the lowness of wages, gives them an opportunity in some cases to undersell us.

On the other hand,—I am not ignorant that the produce of inclosures, if well managed, may be greater than it possibly could be on the same land in an open exposed field; where, among other disadvantages, a man is circumscribed in his ideas of improvement, and obliged to follow his neighbour's method. This is an argument that cannot with truth be denied; but then it must be observed, in return, that, when every person's land is separated from the rest, few occupiers consult the interest of their country so far as to retain it all in cultivation; on the contrary, they usually apply the best parts of it to the purposes of grazing, and, according to the quantity laid down, the practice is in a greater or less degree injurious to population. This assertion is not founded on prejudice, but is a fact confirmed by daily experience; for, by tracing its effects in one instance, we find, that, after the farmer has changed his mode of business by the aforesaid alteration, he has no further occasion for more than half his labourers:

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the rest, then, are dismissed; they have their livings to seek, but to whither shall we direct them? Our towns are no ways in need of carmen and porters; soldiers (thank God) not wanted at present, and seamen in times of peace always too plentiful to be all in employ; to manufactures our rustics were not bred, and even had they, we have already hands of this sort in superabundance;—it would be needless to enquire of other farmers for work; their lands are, almost every where, in the same predicament. What then shall they do? where go? They must, when we can no longer find an inducement to their stay, migrate or starve, become idle vagabonds, or heavy burdens to the parishes where they belong. In a word, agriculture and husbandmen dismissed, grazing and luxury introduced, useful land more plentiful, yet farms scarcer than ever, because engrossed into fewer hands; these are the obvious consequences of inclosing commonable fields. Our hills are smoothed into agreeable lawns, but the rough traces of the plough and the produce of plenty no longer remains; instead of a group of hovels, the resort of poverty or the proof of little possessions, there has arisen one spacious and ornamental dwelling; the children of population have forsaken the soil, but the hand of elegance has cloathed it with her mantle. The man

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of taste has not impoverished the country by his improvements or “ his park’s extended bounds*,” but the name of opulence by the injudicious re-division of his estate, by reducing many farms into one empire, many little tenants into a state of vassalage, and many labourers into the worse state of beggary or wretchedness.

If it be asked why the general inclosures and other grievances complained of, have not hitherto produced all the mischiefs here imputed to them? I answer, because other causes have intervened to counteract, in a good measure, their effects. The navigations and different public undertakings throughout the kingdom have for several years past conduced to give employment and bread to those who would otherwise have been left destitute: add to this, that the improvement of waste lands has co-operated to furnish the same means. Pity it is that this real improvement is not unalloyed with the counterfeited species of which we have been speaking.

The employment which the labourer obtains in the noble works that are now almost every

* Goldsmith.

where carrying on is only a transient business, to which a short succession of years will put a period ; and then must follow that last expedient, a migration to the colonies, where all are welcome, and where that encouragement to industry which is denied at home being often given, the reputation of it, ever exaggerated, prevails on multitudes to leave their native country ; many, through real necessity, and not a few through the ideal hopes of opulence, or the instigations of fictitious discontent,—thus, insensibly, as it were, debilitating the mother to increase the power and arrogance of her undutiful offspring, who, already wanting but little of her assistance, only wait for an opportunity to cast off all dependance upon their parent.

Upon summing up these considerations, we find, that, whilst we are inveighing against emigration, we are nevertheless encouraging it by the only sure method—that of depriving our people at home of employment ; and whilst we are complaining for want of bread, are taking a way to deter from the producing of corn.

If it be said that it is only an inconsiderable proportion of common fields which, when inclosed, are converted into pasturage,—let the

objector take a view of any that are not remarkably poor land, or of this belonging to Heckington; he will often find the plough bereft of their moiety, and always of their richest spots †.

This digression is, I own, a long one, yet not too long perhaps for the importance of the subject. It took its rise from two circumstances. One was, an observation of the too general manner in which most authors have concluded of the effects of inclosing, by either extolling or censuring it in the gross; whereas, I have attempted to show that inclosing, like other matters, according as directed in its object, may be productive of infinite good or much evil to the welfare of a nation;——the other, an honest indignation which arose in my breast upon seeing that this fashionable folly had obtained at the aforesaid village.

† However, after all, this may give rise to another enquiry, viz. if our grass land is so amazingly augmented, what unapparent reason can keep up the price of cattle to such an enormous height? This, I confess, is past my comprehension. Perhaps the encrease of stock could not possibly be so rapid as that of the inclosures for their reception, and, in such case, the value must be enhanced until all the lands inclosed or intended to be so are supplied with the necessary quota.

After

After travelling five miles from Heckington, we enter Sleaford, a good town, with some regular buildings, and a neat, but very small, market-place: the church fronts it; a rich piece of Gothic work, disgraced by an ugly heavy spire on the steeple: an organ is just put up. A very pretty rapid stream, divided into two parts, which meet four miles below, contributes to the health and convenience of the inhabitants. Most of the materials of the castle at this town have been carried off: it is no longer a bulwark, and probably in a little time will lose the dignity of an heap of stones.

Proceeding northerly, the country continues cultivated for four miles; you then come to Lincoln heath, and soon pass near Temple Bruer, anciently a preceptory of the Knights Templars†: the sole remains of it are a square tower, 24 feet 7 inches by 22 feet 8, and $38\frac{1}{2}$ in height, exclusive of the corners, which rise higher. This tower was divided into three stories, but of the roofs the lower only is remaining, composed of brick, with two weak ribs of stone, having still in the point of their intersection a large iron ring. A few years ago

† Founded or endowed by the Lady Matilda de Caenz.

there

there were several handsome pillars and arches standing, now demolished, and the extensive subterranean passages and vaults, for the most part, stopped up by rubbish. In the house adjacent to this building lives a Mr. Raynes, the most spirited farmer, the model of his neighbourhood. He has tried several experiments, and among them has introduced those expensive manures, pigeons dung, and oil-cakes ground to a powder: the latter is strewed on the land in the same manner as seed*.

Six miles beyond the temple, upon a hill, is an edifice called the Light-house, 16 feet square at the bottom, and about 40 yards high; it has a wooden stair-case to the top, a flat roof, upon which is erected a kind of large glazed case, meant as a receptacle for the light: the tower, which is of stone, is surrounded by a neat square court, with a little dwelling-house at each corner; these were evidently built for the sake of uniformity, as only one is inhabited; a gate opens into the court on one side, and on the other is a plantation of firs. This building is highly ornamental to the country, but the use (if ever there was any)

* Common, as I am told, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, on lands intended for wheat.

now taken away by a new turnpike; therefore, it is no longer lighted. Three inscriptions upon the structure convey no other intelligence than the distance from London and Lincoln, the gentleman's name ("F. Dashwood," now Lord le Despenser) who caused it to be built, and "1751," the date of erection.

Great part of this extensive heath, about the light house, is lately inclosed, and the very tolerable crops (of barley in particular) which I saw upon so thin and sterile a soil convinces me that there is little land that may not, by careful management and some extraordinary expence, be made to produce a profitable return for cultivation in the produce of corn.

Five miles further is the city of Lincoln; the lower town consisting principally of one street a mile and half long, but the upper part, which contains near half the buildings, is in a more close compact form. Here are a few handsome modern buildings, but many more antique ones: the whole has an air of ancient greatness, arising from the number of monastic remains, some of them converted into dwelling-houses, and others experiencing a change from devotional to the vilest purposes:—add to the effect of these, the
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loftiness

loftiness of the hill, with the cathedral and ruined castle upon it, soaring above the city. Here are thirteen or fourteen parish churches, including three or four in ruins ; the rotten walls of which last are left standing, on account, as it is said, of the revenues : of those preserved entire, and in which divine service is performed, there are few that have any thing remarkable : St. Peter's is a handsome modern edifice. The minster has been so often described that it is not necessary to say any thing more on the subject, except that a general restoration of the inside is in execution, that the famous great bell has a dull heavy sound, and is never tolled but when the judge enters the town to hold the assizes. Not far from the cathedral is the castle, its outer walls are almost entire and very substantial, appear pretty much in their original state when viewed on the outside, but within have much modern patch-work, being repaired with brick, &c. for they are yet useful, as an exterior guard to the prison : here are also two lofty, steep, and apparently artificial, mounts, or at least formed by art into their present shape and difficulty of access : on one of these was a square turret, now the basis of a pleasant summer-house ; the other, the larger of the two, contained the keep or principal tower ; it was round,

round, but the walls remaining are of no great height, though they all appear lofty outwardly from their elevated situation and a moat below. The great gateway of this fortress is entire, and within the area inclosed by its walls is a commodious regular building for holding the assizes; likewise the county goal. At the higher extremity of this city is also the Newport Gate, and other remnants of ancient magnificence. Below hill, the walls of those said to have been John of Gaunt's houses are yet in pretty good condition.

The city is supplied with water by several conduits, among which a modern one upon the bridge, somewhat in a pyramidical form, enriched with rustics, &c. is very pretty. The market-house is large, but disagreeably dark. Here being but little trade, in proportion to the size of the place, and no other manufacture than a small one of camblets, established by Messrs. Thorp and Croft, no great popularity can be expected: not a few of the inhabitants are clergy, or dependants on the cathedral.

The principal article of trade at Lincoln is coals, brought, by means of the Trent and Foss-dyke, from the West-Riding of Yorkshire,

shire, &c. with these the merchants supply a considerable circuit of country: But the Witham, though again made navigable hither, is not of any very great use to the city on that account; the chief freights upon it being wool from Boston, consigned to Yorkshire, and oats from the borders of the river returned to the former: hence, coals and the imports of timber, &c. being not amongst the traffick in which the two towns are jointly concerned, I am justified in asserting that it is nothing very capital.

Leaving Lincoln, and proceeding towards Torksey, I found the country a flat, barren, disagreeable moor, in some places covered with furze, in others boggy, and interspersed with much water. The soil is certainly very bad, but far from being incapable of improvement: the first attempt to amend it, however, should be a public undertaking, by draining the whole, which (from the fall of water at Torksey lock) appears to me to be practicable, and has been often accounted an easy work: if so, it is disgraceful to an enterprising age to let so much land lie in a condition rather baneful than beneficial to the community.

Four

Four miles before I arrived at Torksey, I observed some new inclosures, covered with extremely coarse grass, and unappropriated to any use; they appeared very hungry poor land, which, had it met with more spirited occupiers, might have been much altered by the plough.

This village is situated by the Trent, upon the edge of which, near the ferry, are the remains of a convent of nuns, a large building, founded by King John; but by the ruins, which consist of one of the side-walls, built of brick, and pretty lofty, it seems never to have had any pretension to magnificence.

At Torksey ferry I crossed the river, here a very fine one; the country, for two miles, was a rich meadow, often flooded; but on proceeding through the next village there was a change into open arable land: after rising a hill, at the top of a field beyond this place (which has the distinction of a common bench), you have an extensive prospect over the country towards the east, terminated by the hills near Lincoln, among which, that in the city appearing here almost perpendicular, and crowned with the minster is, indeed, the best object of the scene, which is, nevertheless, prettily decorated with

some neighbouring woods, and corn-fields, and enlivened by several villages upon the banks of the Trent, as well as by the swelling sails of the vessels passing along it.

Leaving this eminence, I continued my tour through a fruitful country, scattered with hop-grounds, to Retford; a little corporation, connected with West Retford, another parish, by buildings, though distinct in government, this being only a village: each parish has a church. The places, taken together, are pretty extensive; the buildings tolerably handsome, and the moot-hall * particularly neat. A manufacture of coarse cloth, for hop-bags, &c. employs many indigent people. Some years ago the great north road was turned through this town, which now is highly beneficial; and the canal from the Trent to Chesterfield, being to pass by the ends of two streets, will be another advantage, probably of equal consequence.

From Retford to Worksop, part of the road lies over a common, part over a cultivated country: on entering this rather small, but neat and well-built town, a building occurs to observa-

* Or Town house.

tion,

tion, a relique of former sanctity ; I suppose part of an abbey founded here by William de Lovetot, in the year 1103 : this is worth seeing, at least where little else that is curious is to be seen. Nature, however, has taken care to ornament Workfop, the situation being a pleasant valley, watered by the Ryton and several lesser brooks ; and if art has not been profuse of her favours, it was only that she might bestow them the more plentifully upon its vicinage ; for there are more noblemen's seats in the neighbourhood than any other spot in the kingdom as distant from London can boast of. Among those is (within seven miles of the farthest), the mansions of the dukes of Norfolk, Newcastle, Portland, Kingston, and Leeds. The canal is also to be conveyed to the north-side of this town. One mile from hence is Workfop-manor, a very magnificent new house, belonging to the first of the peers before-mentioned : the building, though large, is only one side of a quadrangle, which, with two interior courts, constituted the original design, a design, the execution of which (prevented by the death of a *favourite* heir) would have equalled any thing of the kind, as to size, perhaps, in Europe. The architect of this palace was, I think, Mr. Payne ; and near it is a beautiful pleasure-ground ; but for an accurate description,

scription of this, and other particulars, I shall, to avoid repetition, refer my readers to Young's "Tour in the North of England," Vol. I. p. 366. The farm-house in the park has a singular front, the top finished with battlements, and the whole somewhat in the castle stile, whence its name, the Castle-farm.

The park at Worktop is naturally very fine ; a range of hills, within its extent, bound the view from the back part of the house, and are covered with a series of woods, hanging to the eye in a beautiful manner ; one of these acclivities, in particular, is a charming object ; it rises in a bold manner, and is nobly crowned with wood ; from the summit is a pretty prospect over the adjacent country. This park, already so beautiful, might with ease be made one of the most delightful spots imaginable ; and to effect the improvement, nothing more would be necessary than to erect a few ornamental buildings in some of those delicious situations among the hills which nature seems to have created for the purpose ; to enlarge a small water below the house into an extensive irregular lake ; and, finally, to scatter the shores of it, as well as other parts of the vale, with a few additional clumps of trees of different hues. I may be censured, perhaps,

perhaps, for introducing the latter to fill up the Elysian group, as an opposition to the rules of modern taste; yet surely fashion, potent as it is, may give place to beauty; for my own part, the wood-nymphs should not only have admission into, but should occupy a distinguished place in a terrestrial paradise of my creating.—I think there is much propriety in Beattie's expression,

“The pomp of groves;”———
for, surely, it must be allowed, that there are few objects, except mountains and cataracts, more magnificent than large spreading trees.

Proceeding towards Chesterfield, the country was agreeable; from the hill before you descend into Whitwell an enchanting landscape opens at once to view; it consists of a rich cultivated vale, cut into enclosures by hedge-rows, scattered with forest-trees, and bounded irregularly by variegated hills, here covered with woods, and there with corn-fields, enlivened in this place with flocks grazing upon their gentle slopes, and decorated in that with farms and dwellings; the distant plantations of Worksop spread their shade upon the brighter green, and at your feet is the village, over-topped by a boldly-swelling little hill of a fine verdure; a rock or two sticking
out

out of its side is so different from the rest of the country as to be rather remarkable, and adds a variety to the whole. Was there a small proportion of water in this view, it might vie with most.

Still keeping this road for two miles, and passing over a small moor, I turned off upon the turnpike leading to Rotherham; this was a pleasant ride, affording several sketches of rural elegance, one of which is enriched by a natural pool or lake on the side of the road; but that from Barlborough is the best of these landscapes.

Soon after, the road enters another moor, ascending the summit of an extreme high hill, from whence is commanded a prospect far more singular and beautiful than any of the preceding. The declivity beneath is very steep, and the vale overlooked in a manner remarkably distinct and picturesque; it is chiefly composed of innumerable inclosures, separated (as in common) by hedges, and exhibiting a fine contrasted variety of appearances; some under culture, some again, though applied to tillage, now lying fallow, and others covered with a verdant turf, scattered with a few houses and woods, and waving at a distance to the top of some hills
which

which partly bound the view, but a break or two between them discovers a more remote country: the village and coal-pits of Killimarrh directly under you, and a wood filling a narrow vale to the north, are additions to this noble production of the pencil of nature. In a word, I have seen landscapes, which, considering the harmony in their union of different features, were more compleat; but never met with one where the diminutive parts were more distinct, nor one that had so much of the beauty resulting from this peculiarity.

A little before I came to the seventh milestone on this side Rotherham, I turned into Norwood, and, after riding about half a mile on a very intricate path, arrived at the wonder I was in search of, the western mouth of the subterraneous navigation under a hill at the N. E. corner of this wood.

The slope of the hill, near the bottom of it, being cut down (within a channel or space of proper breadth) to a perpendicular, in the lower part of this is formed the entrance of the tunnel, but it was then closed up, all but a small door-way.

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Upon

Upon enquiry at the inn at Eckington, I found that the length of the navigation under ground, when finished, will be a mile and quarter, and that it had not been long begun. I should observe, that at this town, Worktop, and wherever I asked the opinions of people I met with concerning the future utility of this navigation, I was always answered that their sentiments and those of the country were in general these, — that it is undoubtedly a noble undertaking, and well calculated to promote an increase of trade in the country; but the sums requisite for the execution being so prodigious *, they are apprehensive a tonnage which arises only from the lead, coal, stone, and a few other products of the neighbourhood navigated upon it (and which, for want of great towns in the course of the cut, will be almost the only articles of its employment) cannot pay the subscribers common interest for their money expended.

A stranger, like myself, whose stay in the country was very short, is not qualified to confirm or controvert this remark; and perhaps experience can alone be equal to such a decision.

* By the act, the proprietors were prohibited from beginning the work until 100,000*l.* was subscribed.

I may,

I may, however, add, as an evident truth, that, could the canal be carried further than Chesterfield, into the center of the Peak, (which, at the same time, I believe to be impossible) no expence could be incurred that would not be amply repaid by the immense traffic in minerals, which must necessarily result from such a convenience. Even as the case is, this water-carriage may, perhaps, become the vehicle of transportation to a considerable share of these heavy commodities from the above-mentioned country, though it will not engross the whole trade.

Between Eckington and Chesterfield the road lies over a large moor, where we pass several coal-mines, and, at the further end, a building from whence proceeded much smoke, which I was told is a glass-house. There is an extensive prospect from this moor, but much inferior in beauty to that of Killimarsh.

Not far from the glass-house is Stavely forge, an iron-work turned by the Rother.

From this place to Chesterfield the country is pleasing; in one place a fine extent of woods stretches along a range of hills to the right.

Chesterfield is a large town; but, as I passed through, I saw nothing uncommon but the ugly church; it is old, and built of bad stone, but rendered most disgusting by its wooden spire (covered with lead) being so much warped † that I discerned its crookedness at three miles distance. In the town is a manufacture of pots.—At Asher and many villages in the neighbourhood some mile is much cultivated.

Keeping the turnpike-road that leads to Derby, in about two miles a lane extends toward the right; proceeding along this, I found the way, for a few miles, really beautiful; the hills bold, pretty lofty, and many cultivated to their tops; the whole a varied agreeable scenery.

† An author of genius has told us, seemingly in seriousness, though perhaps only for the sake of sporting a little wit, that the imitation of a crooked billet was the architect's intention.—Writers of an inferior class have contented themselves with affirming the appearance of crookedness to be only a *deceptio visus*, though its reality is too obvious, one would think, to need any other testimony than the opportunity of viewing it; whence I conclude that those who made this strange assertion either had bad eyes, or were afraid to trust to the evidence of good ones, remembering the old adage, "appearances often deceive us."—At length Mr. Rennant clears up the wonderful difficulty by speaking a plain truth, that it was bent by a violent wind.

On

On a nearer approach to the Peak the hills become rocky and barren, but, without being striking in any great degree, begin to rise with more of that greatness, that sublimity, which, while it characterizes the works of nature, points out the impotency of those of art; and indeed, the neighbouring vale of Matlock is an instance, out of the many that might be produced, which proves that we should never employ the latter any other way than as an imitator; at best, she never equals the models of her great mistress.

Before we reach this celebrated glen, there are four miles of road over a very extensive moor, covered in some places with fern, but every where with large stones sticking out of the earth, and exhibiting a black, desolate, and melancholy appearance; the hills are not comparable in height to the mountains of several northern counties, or even to some in the more western parts of this; however they are steep enough to oblige any but a daring traveller to alight and walk down, and at the foot of most a brook or rather a small torrent pours impetuously along. Nature seems also to have debarred improvement in this dreary waste, having placed an insurmountable object in the way of cultivation, by fixing upon it those prominent rocks.

From

From one point of view in the road, a distant hill appears on the left, which, rising abruptly, is terminated by a pointed rock in an odd manner.

It is a very old remark, but holds good to this day, that stone-walls are the usual fences of inclosed lands in this country; however it is applicable only to the uplands, because hedges generally supply their place in the vallies.

Matlock is a straggling village, built in a very romantic manner; for, between the baths and bridge many cottages are placed on little natural shelves, the horizontal surfaces of rocky projections from the mountain, a few yards above the road, and in some places the roof of one almost touches the floor of another; several are nearly hid by little gardens or shrubs growing in the clefts of the rock: upon the whole they exhibit a pretty picturesque appearance, when viewed from the road, or the opposite cliffs, and assist in the general magnificent display which nature here presents to the beholder.

Beyond the northern extremity of the high extent of rocks the vale widens, and is bounded by steep mountains, the front of a neighbouring

ing one on the east side, forms another remarkable situation for a group of houses, rising higher and higher, from the bottom to an aerial summit.

It is needless to mention the views at Matlock, as Mr. A. Young has been particularly minute on that head, and has, indeed, produced a lively portrait of their beauties, in his "Farmer's Tour;" V. I. p. 204.

I must however remark, that it is difficult to comprehend what this gentleman means, where he directs us "to cross the river near the turnpike," in order to view these prospects from the long range of rocks which form so fine a natural terrace; for the turnpike leads along the edge of the river for two miles: nor do I know of any passage over the stream except at the north end of the glen, which is evidently the last point of view in the walk followed by Mr. Y——. The travellers who intend that others should taste the same pleasure from a course of varied landscapes, which themselves have experienced, should be exact in pointing out their rout.

If I might venture another trifling observation on Mr. Y——'s description, it should be, that

that his words,—"the boundaries of the vale are cultivated hills on one side,"—are not quite consistent with the idea raised by the real appearance; for though there are cultivated patches on each hill, yet those are small, compared with the waste; nevertheless, I do not assert this to detract from the character of the place; for, on the contrary, some of these lofty hills, partly covered with shrubby wood and crags, have, in their native roughness, immensity and grandeur enough to be, in my fancy, superior to the decorations of culture.

The greatest beauty, however, of Matlock, is the leafy garment which is spread over every cliff in the range, rising from the river, before-mentioned; I believe I may add the greatest curiosity; for, surely, trees growing in the utmost closeness, to the height of three or four hundred feet, upon the face of rocks, absolutely perpendicular, and without the least appearance of earth, are extremely singular, as well as excessively ornamental.

Besides the range of buildings at the old bath (in which are excellent accommodations for company), here is a handsome inn lately erected; in this building is also a spring, with conveniences
for

for bathing; some people think the virtues of the water at the new bath more efficacious than those of the old.

Fronting this inn, in the vast rocky wall of the Derwent, is a lead-mine, the mechanical operations of which are in part performed by the current of that river.

Around the baths many poor women are generally waiting with petrifications, chrystals, and other curiosities, the produce of the adjacent country: the naturalist may also here meet with several species of moss, &c. worth preserving.

Leaving the baths, you find the vale terminated towards the south, by a large detached pile of rocks, with two breaks or interruptions in their course; one for the passage of the river, the other admitting the road; though I am not confident that the latter is not hewn by art, but imagine it the work of nature.

In about two miles travelling you will arrive at the edge of a mountain, from whence you look down upon that pleasing and very uncommon landscape mentioned in the first Vol. of the East-

ern Tour, p. 200. Wirksworth, as viewed from this spot, does not appear to be a large town, but is famous for its lead-mines; their number is very considerable.

Some of the hills between Matlock and Derby are steep, but far from being equally wild in appearance with those between Chesterfield and the former; neither are these troublesome to travel.

There are several spaces of rich inclosure in the vallies hereabouts, and they become more and more numerous as you come nearer to Derby; but, in the aggregate, I cannot say there is so great a proportion of the country cultivated as may be expected from a perusal of Mr. Young's account.

As you proceed southerly, you not only find the country in a more improved state, but the hills also subside gradually, so that the last four miles to Derby is almost an entire flat. Less than a mile before the arrival at that place, a wier in the river produces a pleasing harmony of falling water.

On

On entering Derby, a most beautiful and elegant house presents itself, the residence of Mr. Gisborn, a gentleman of great fortune : the town is large, flourishing, and well-built ; the market-place remarkably handsome : the buildings are chiefly brick, but some of the streets rather badly paved.

The great silk-mill employs between three and four hundred hands, mostly women and girls ; the earnings of the latter being only from two-pence to three-pence a day : here are also seven or eight smaller machines of this kind, some of them moved by water, and others by the power given by the pressure of children, &c. in a large wheel, similar to that of a common crane : one I observed had an ass and two boys walking in it. Much silk is sent from hence to supply the manufacturers of Nottingham.

The manufacture of porcelain employs, in all, near an hundred men and boys ; several of the painters earn a guinea and a half per week : Mr. Duesbury (who has also bought the manufactory at Chelsea) is every day bringing the art nearer to that perfection at which it has arrived in other countries : Derby porcelain is at present by no

means contemptible: figures and other ornaments are among their most capital articles.

Here is also a pottery, and I was showed an imitation of the queen's ware, but it does not come up to the original, the produce of Staffordshire.

However, all these manufactures do not, perhaps, give business to so many people as the single one of hosiery goods; in the fabrics of fine worsted, cotton, and silk stockings, breeches and waistcoat pieces, &c. this town is equal to any in the kingdom.

The situation of Derby is, in my idea, very agreeable; but I mention it the rather, because an article that I have heard objected to: the river is broad and beautiful, has an antient stone bridge over it, but is navigable no higher than this town, on account of the wiers. The fine verdure of the rich land round Derby improves the pleasantness of its environs, and an eminence a little to the north, covered with wood, compleats and adds a charm to the whole.

From this place to Nottingham the country is rich, all cultivated, and very populous; the
noise

noise of stocking-frames is heard in most of the houses: the views on the road are rather those of plenty than variety. Three miles before you reach the last-mentioned town is Wollaton-hall, the seat of Lord Middleton; a building that, at a distance, resembles the great tower of a cathedral: it was erected in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and is a lofty edifice, with Gothic windows; the situation pretty, commanding some tolerable landscapes in the park and country adjacent.

Here is a handsome pile of stables and out-houses lately built; in the front a pediment enriched with sculpture.

At Wollaton, Radford, and some other neighbouring villages, are many coal-mines, chiefly the property of Lord Middleton; the coals, both here and in Derbyshire, sold in large masses; they are easier lighted than, perhaps, any in the kingdom.

Nottingham is inferior to few inland towns in England, whether we respect its flourishing state or number of people. The buildings are all of brick, exceedingly neat and regular; the market place is larger than any I know of; at one
end

end of it is a fine large public edifice mis-called the Change, being, upon the first floor, rooms appropriated to corporation feasts, meetings, &c. and the ground underneath is a dark flesh-market.

Some of the streets on the declivity of the rock upon which the town is situated are very singular; when in them, you are upon a level with the roofs of houses in a lower street, and so near that you may reach several of the chimnies: in other places we meet with a row of dwellings, all scooped out of the precipices, which are of a mouldering sand-stone.

The castle is placed on the highest of these rocks, a situation as well calculated for pleasure as defence; it is a very large structure, with one ornamented front; Corinthian columns on a rustic back or ground; a grand flight of steps, with balustrades, forming a central entrance, over which is a niche with an equestrian statue. Within are several fine apartments, and some pictures, but the place has been deserted by the noble owners for many years, and this "lordly dome" has now no other inhabitant than a servant or two to clean and take care of the rooms and furniture.

The prospect from hence is extensive, and the Trent meandering through the meadows very beautiful, but, perhaps, more wood is wanting in the fore-ground of the landscape to render it compleat.

At Nottingham are three churches, one of them a very spacious edifice ; but these, with the addition of several (some say eight) dissenting meeting-houses, are scarcely sufficient for the inhabitants. Here is a handsome county-hall, just finished ; and, among a variety of charitable institutions, an establishment for a certain number of aged persons, called the New Hospital, founded, in his life-time, by Abel Collin, Esq; 1709 ;—a handsome quadrangle of stone. The town is supplied with water by an engine erected on the little river Lind ; this forces the water to a reservoir at the top of a hill near the castle ; from thence it is distributed by pipes to every house.

The principal manufactures here are silk, cotton, and worsted stockings, mitts, &c. &c. in which a very great number of people are employed : they are most famous for silk goods, Derby exceeding them in the fine worsted, and Leicester in the coarse. The making of glass
wares

wares is laid aside, and that of pots become very trifling, but here are some small silk-mills, and also a few on the same principle for cotton, lately erected. Here too some other businesses are carried on which are not common every where, such as the preparation of white lead, the cutting of diamonds, &c.

Leaving Nottingham, and passing the Trent by a noble old stone bridge, in about ten miles you arrive at Bingham, a straggling inconsiderable market-town; the country through which you pass to it is mostly grass-inclosures and flat; part of that extensive plain the vale of Belvoir.

The next town in my rout was Bottesford, a still smaller place, with as small a market: the church is the burial-place of the dukes of Rutland, and contains some handsome monuments erected to various branches of that family. The vale continues till within three miles of Grantham, when, upon ascending a hill, you at once command the whole*. All the way from Bingham thither, the land is arable, mostly uninclosed, and well-peopled.

* See further, "Tour to the North," Vol. I.

Grantham is rather a large town, and here, as at most of the stages upon the North road, the multitude of passengers has given rise and support to several excellent inns. The houses are, in general, neatly built; but though it appears that the spire of the church is 82 yards high, it does not seem so very lofty, on account of a low disadvantageous situation.

Two miles from this place you reach Belton, the seat of the late Sir John Cust, a very good house, containing some elegant apartments; the gardens are neither striking nor extensive. On an eminence in the park is an ornamental building, commanding a pretty view.

Upon a high hill overlooking Belton is Sison-park, belonging to Sir John Thorold. The house is a large plain edifice of white stone, not entirely finished: it consists of a center, with two wings projecting in a curve forward; hence, the ground-plan is not unlike that of the queen's palace, but differs in this, that the wings are connected with the superior building by a plain wall instead of a colonade: some of the rooms, I was told, are to be finished in a magnificent manner; but, if grandeur be the object in view,

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it is pity the architect did not make a few of his principal apartments of a larger size.

It gave me pleasure to remark that I had now travelled for 46 or 47 miles together without finding one spot of uncultivated ground: here, however, begins a heath, which extends, with a slight variegation of new inclosures, for three miles, till you arrive at Ancaster, once a Roman city, but now a village of one street, with a pretty good inn or two.

When this village is passed, you are again upon Lincoln heath, and from hence to that city is an ancient Roman rampart, visible in many places. On the left of it is a tract of inclosures, which are continually increasing upon this enormous extent of open downs.

In tillage, the custom of this country is to use four, and even six horses to a plough. The general method of improving land here is, by paring and burning the surface; this costs twenty shillings an acre. They sow much saintfoin and turneps.

Proceeding, and passing Sleaford (before described), you find the country to Folkingham chiefly

chiefly open fields, and tolerably populous. At Frekingham†, in this road, (according to the account of the inhabitants) three Saxon princes were buried. Folkingham is a very small market-town, but had once a castle, the scite of which is yet ascertained by the hollows and undulations of the ground at the south-east corner.

The soil now improves, a lively population continues, and the country becomes extremely woody : within three miles of Bourn, I turned up a road to the right, by Stenfield; the spaw here is now neglected, though thirty years ago it was in some repute.

Further to the west of Grimsthorp, is the noble seat of the duke of Ancaster; but Mr. Young having described in an exact manner, I must desire my readers to apply to the first Vol. of his "North Tour." As an addition to that account, it may be proper to observe, that, among several apartments in the house fitted up in a neat genteel manner since Mr. Young's visit, there is one, called the duchess's dressing-room, which is more original; the decorations are all green and white, and in an airy pleasing taste; in the central part of the room, branches, and other ornaments, in papier maché, support various

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small

† The name is supposed to be a corruption of *Three-king-home*.

small porcelain figures : the whole a work where elegance is united with moderate oeconomy. The house itself is a very large edifice ; the front, which is more modern than the rest, was designed by Vanburgh, and has a little of that unfortunate heaviness which appears to have been inseperable from the ideas of this artist. At a former time I was told, that the park measured sixteen miles three quarters in circumference, and was esteemed the largest in England ; since then it has, as I now heard, nevertheless, been somewhat enlarged ; but different spots in it are cultivated. From the dwelling is a view of many fine woods.

Between Grimsthorp and Stamford the country is arable, with an intermixture of commons ; the soil in general poor ; quarries of pretty good stone are frequent.

Stamford is situated in a vale upon the Welland, which was made navigable, by means of locks, as long ago as the 13th of Queen Elizabeth, and is now of great utility to the place ; the houses are of brick or stone, some are old, but among the modern ones are several with neat and really handsome fronts. Here is a new theatre which cost 2000l. erecting, some very noble,

ble much frequented inns, several conduits, for the supply of water, and the greatest market for corn in the county. The town, viewed from some of the neighbouring hills, makes a good appearance.

Burleigh-house is well-known as a magnificent seat of Lord Exeter, a mile to the east of Stamford, and in my road, the first object to detain attention is Wathorp, another seat of the same earl, entire, though now totally deserted. A little further are many slate-quarries; in all of them it lies near the surface, and is much inferior to the Cornish and other sorts.

The road, as far as Kettering, is pleasant; a populous, well cultivated, arable country, abounding with brooks and gentlemen's seats: at Geddington I observed a very beautiful cross, which may be, perhaps, about 30 feet high; it is one of those erected by Edward the first, as a resting-place for the corps of Eleanor his queen, when on its road to Westminster. I read that another of these crosses is now standing within half a mile of Northampton, but, not having seen it, I cannot assert the truth.

Beyond

Beyond Geddington is Boughton, belonging to the duke of Montague; a house whose external appearance much disappointed me; for, from the encomiums lavished on it by some description-writers, I was led to expect a magnificent structure, eminent in design and execution; but, alas! instead of that, we find rather a large group of buildings, without any thing striking in their connection or general effect.

Kettering is a populous and tolerably large town, a mixture of good and paltry houses; spinning of jerseys its principal employment; in this branch, I was told, 500 hands are employed. Lace-making is another article which supports many of the poor; and this manufacture is here, as well as all over the southern part of the country, on the increase.

After passing Kettering, the country soon changes much for the worse; the popularity, woods, brooks, and villages all disappear; pasturage becomes prevalent, arable land scarce and sluggishly cultivated. The road, lying mostly through pastures, is rendered tedious by gates, and is, besides, the most dull and intricate that
can

can be imagined*. I have seldom seen a tract of inclosed land so much in want of the plough, nor one where that instrument, directed by spirit and activity, might perform a more wonderful alteration: I sincerely believe there are not twenty houses within view of the road in all the fourteen miles, and the occupiers of the land are in such a lethargy, that for want of manuring, draining, and clearing away the rushes, weeds, &c. or rather for want of a greater frequency of tillage, not a half of the advantage arises from the farms which they are capable of producing. These circumstances readily account for the scarcity of inhabitants.

Northampton is a town of large size, chiefly built of a reddish stone; the market-place is a fine square, and one of the streets near it spacious, and remarkably handsome; but several of the rest, though upon the whole well-built, are either crooked, too narrow, or mixed with mean old buildings, so as to spoil the effect which would result from so many good edifices,

* I am told that the other road, which goes by Wellingborough, passes over a country much better peopled and cultivated, and that there is, at this town, a considerable lace manufactory.

if properly disposed. The river Nen being made navigable hither, was opened with great rejoicings, August 7th, 1761. Out of four churches, that of Allhallows alone is remarkable; it is modern, and has a handsome ionic portico, or rather colonade, crowned with a balustrade and statue of Charles II. extending the length of the front, the columns in couplets. The inside is finished in an elegant manner, and in it is preserved a catalogue of the contributions received by this town, on account of the devastation made here by the dreadful fire in 1675.

Northampton has a manufacture of shoes, boots, leather bottles, &c. and a good many people employed in the lace way.

Proceeding towards Oxford, the country changed again, but this variation was more pleasing than the preceding one; uninclosed arable land, agreeably hilly and populous, but rather wanting in wood. Towcester is the first market-town on this road; it is a small place, however, that affords nothing which will much interest curiosity: on a hill, a mile before you reach this town, is a seat belonging to Lord Pomfret, the front ornamented with Corinthian pilasters, but begins to wear the complexion of age.

From Towcester to Brackley the road is pleasant enough, and the country woody and cultivated; this last-mentioned town is not inconsiderable as to extent, but it is straggling, and wretchedly built. Here is a pretty large manufacture of lace: from this neighbourhood a copious supply of fresh butter is sent to London.

It is remarkable that, in the last twenty miles of my journey, the evil-genius of field-inclosing had not yet exerted his baneful influence.

Leaving Brackley, the first nine miles has much barren waste land, but the remainder of the way to Islip all cultivated, though dull and unpleasing.

Having missed my way, I passed through Islip, and, afterwards, over a small common, on which is some hills, presenting an extensive prospect, the best I had beheld for some time, and to which the public buildings of Oxford are a capital ornament.

This seat of learning is so precisely described in several books*, that it would be mere pla-

* Particularly (as to the present state) in the "Oxford Guide," a pamphlet reprinted annually;—also by Mr. Young, in his North Tour, Vol. III. p. 411,—&c.

giamism to mention it, further than to add a few observations which were either thought too trifling or have escaped the authors of the accounts already extant.

We have generally been told that, "the private buildings are neat, and the public ones sumptuous." The latter part of this remark will, I believe, meet with an universal concurrence, and, though the former is more liable to objection, yet, we must allow that the High-street is really very handsome in all respects, but, at the same time, the private dwellings in general, take the city throughout, are far from deserving the character of neatness, or uniformity of structure; indeed, so far from it, that in many streets half the houses are of timber plaistered over, some of them built in a barbarous old method, the upper stories projecting forward; yet, in regard to this last article, not quite so ugly as in a few other towns that I have seen.

In the suburb at the entrance from London is an hospital for diseased persons, where none can be admitted (I think) but such whose cure is judged capable of being effected or furthered by a medicinal spring within the building. It is a neat commodious edifice.

The

The remains of Oxford castle are a strong square tower and a large artificial mount, the latter now ornamented with trees : there is nothing singular in the construction of the tower, but from the mount is an enchanting prospect : on one hand the city appears beneath you, and with its numerous spires, domes, &c. raises an idea of vast magnificence ; on the other side is a fine extended vale, rich in verdure and wood, terminated by hills, and nobly decorated by the Isis serpentizing along to some distance, then losing itself behind a variety of objects, and afterwards appearing again in one distinct sheet of water ; the whole exhibiting a very agreeable scene of native beauty, much heightened by the pompous strokes of art.

The streets of this city are well lighted, and excellently paved with the smaller sort of those pebbles which are generally used for that purpose ; the foot-paths leading from the town to some distance are handsome gravel-walks.

Ascending the first hill in the London road, you have a view back into the vale, of the city, surrounded by wood and gardens, of the neighbouring country, and of the principal river just presenting itself in several spots.

Passing through Tetworth, a trifling market-town, nothing remarkable occurs till you arrive at Stoken-Church hill, the road up which is lately much improved by cutting away the side: from the top is a very extensive prospect, but by no means so beautiful as several that I have noticed; the country, from Oxford hither, was in general cultivated, yet not striking in beauty, except the first mile or two,

At this hill begins a series of immense beech-woods, extending to Gerrard's-Cross, only twenty miles from London, the road all along very delightful. But

Before we arrive there, I ought to speak of the Wickhams:—The first, West Wickham, is a village, nobly adorned with the villa of Lord Je. Despencer:—the church and mausoleum towering to the clouds; the house and temples; the fine smooth lawns of the park, contrasted by the boldness of the hills around; and the beautiful water, so elegantly decorated by a brigantine upon it;—all form a most exquisite view, at once soft and romantic.

The other is called High Wickham, a considerable, genteel town, surpassed in the neatness

of its buildings by very few : an exceedingly pretty stream which runs by the road side between these two towns, works, in that part of its course, several paper-mills.

When past Gerard's-Cross, the country becomes at once flat, and continues so most of the way to London; having, besides, an useless heath or two : upon the whole it may please him well enough who has been

——“ long ith' populous city pent,
Where houses thick, and sewers annoy the
air†,”

but to one who has just passed the beautiful country that precedes will appear rather tame and insipid.

In this rout you pass through Uxbridge, a town not so large, nor half so well built as Wickham; and here I shall dismiss my tour, as the remaining fifteen miles to town afford nothing very interesting, or that my readers are not well acquainted with, or, at least, that has not already found sufficient “ fritterers ‡” without adding another to the useless number.

† Milton.

‡ A Young : Vide—Six weeks tour.

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EXCURSION, &c.

UNDERTAKEN SEPTEMBER, 1774.

HAVING resolved upon taking another ramble, and chusing a method of conveyance, which to me was the more agreeable, as such a one I had not been much accustomed to,—I sailed from London for Boston; but meeting with little in this voyage that deserves notice, save what has contributed to fill the pages of other topographers, I shall not swell the contents of mine with more than a mention of two or three circumstances, relating to the county of Norfolk, which have, heretofore, been omitted.

—But before I proceed further, let me stop to hint that, should any accuse my remarks of being trivial and uninteresting, I can only reply that, I consider myself but as a gleaner,
a col-

a collector of the refuse of that field where some more ingenious travellers have lately gathered the plentiful crop; and though, like other gleaners, my labours cannot boast of being very consequential to the public, yet, should they contribute but a little to the common stock, or (to drop the figure) should they be found to convey one piece of useful intelligence unknown before, correct one mistake, or any way lend assistance towards attaining a more perfect knowledge of the *present* state of our native country,—then, indeed, the importance of the subject, and the necessity of being acquainted with it, may make some sort of excuse for the publication, and some trifling amends for the unpolished language in which it is written.

This premised, I may observe that the coast all the way from Yarmouth to Cley is a high steep shore; at Foulness, near Cromer, extremely lofty; yet the whole is of a tenacious species of earth, a sort of sand-coloured clay, and not rock, as might be expected from its firm, abrupt, and often perpendicular termination. Though more of the country is rabbit-warrens than might be wished, yet the border next the sea is uncommonly populous, in some places

places beyond any that I ever met with (where manufactures were out of the question), the vallies being absolutely almost covered with villages; and, at many particular spots, the cultivated slopes rising boldly from the beach, thickly scattered with dwellings, churches, and woods, form most agreeable pictures, which, viewed from the water, have, besides, the advantage of novelty to recommend them, as they are held up to the sight, instead of being spread out beneath our feet like landscapes in common.

The shore about Cromer produces the very finest crabs and lobsters; at Sheringham the beach is covered with huge pebbles*, where, with many sloops are freighted for paving streets and causeways.

The haven of Cley is lately much improved, and now admits vessels of considerable burthen to the town, which, as well as its church, seems pretty large.

A little further is Wells, where a good many small merchant-vessels, chiefly sloops, are built: the place also owns several of this kind, some of

* Commonly known by the name of Coggles.

which

which are employed in carrying corn and malt to London, &c. and others freight in the North with coals. On this coast are also two or three village ports, of less eminence, but supported by the same trade.

Continuing our voyage, we gained a view of the Lincolnshire coast; which, as if meant for a contrast to that of Norfolk, is all an entire flat, secured from the tides by a vast bank of earth, and strengthened in places where the salt-marsh is wore away by jetties of timber. To the south of Wainfleet some thousands of acres have lately been obtained from the sea, by an embankment, and proves amazingly fine land; but, to the northward of that place the ocean is so much less submissive as to be continually making encroachments on the shore, and the utmost skill and industry of the inhabitants is, at some times, scarce sufficient to secure its boundaries.

The lower salt-marshes of this county produce samphire, and the flat sands most of the smaller sorts of shell-fish; muscles, in particular, are so plentiful that cobbles frequently make a voyage from the north in order to load with

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this article*; the beds are now, however, somewhat exhausted by the practice.

When landed, I took a second journey through the Boston or Haute Huntré fen, consisting, by estimation of 22,000 acres, 17 or 18 thousand of which are already inclosed and cultivated, and was astonished at the alteration this inclosure has made in a few (nay even in the last two) years: instead of the surface being half covered with thistles in summer and with water in winter, we have now an immense corn-field, such an extensive tract of oats as is, perhaps, no where to be exceeded, either for size or crops; but the new houses and barns (the latter especially) are so extremely numerous as to enhance the surprize, and yet, considerable as is the benefit to population, it is by no means equal to what it might have been, had the land been divided into small instead of large farms.

Proceeding towards Grantham, I stepped out of the direct road to visit the remains of a commandery of Knights Templars, at Aslackby near Folkingham, which was overlooked in my former tour, though but a few yards from the

* Being used as a bait in the fishery of cod, &c.

turnpike I passed. The part now standing is connected with a dwelling-house, is a sort of low tower, which has been divided into three rooms, the upper room or story being of a more contracted width than the others, but the middlemost floor is lately fallen; the lower room has an arched roof in this stile of building, and much handsomer than that at Temple Bruer.

From Aslackby to Grantham the country is alternately inclosures and heath; from the latter to Newark all cultivated, but open.

Newark is a considerable town, larger than Grantham, well-built, and has the conveniency of water-carriage by a navigable branch of the Trent; over this a stone bridge of seven arches is now building; the design is elegant, but would, perhaps, have appeared more magnificent in execution had the arches been fewer and thereby admitted of a larger size. The market-place at Newark is not so spacious as it has been represented, but is a very pretty square; in it they are erecting a town-hall, with a good front, a butchery, divided by rows of handsome columns, underneath. This agreeable market-place is injured by a house near one corner, vilely suffered to project and take off

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from the size as well as regularity. A small uniform street, built here by the late Dr. Wilson, is neat and pleasing; the church large* and handsome; its steeple, adorned with carving, and crowned with a spire (deservedly admired by Mr. Young for the elegance of proportion) said to be 233 feet high to the extremity of the masonry. Here are also some almshouses, and striking ruins of the castle, which is situated on the edge of the river: the walls of this vast pile are thick, and remain yet of a great height. Before these ruins is a very good bowling-green, and adjacent, a manufactory of sack-ing, employing three or four score hands.

The North road, after leaving this town crosses the vale of Trent, which being much subject to inundations often retarded the traveller, and was passable at those times only by boats. This, with the additional inconvenience of an excessive imposition frequently demanded for conveying the unfortunate passenger, induced the people most interested to make a road so high and substantial as to be passed with safety and ex-

* According to a printed authority, the length is 75 yards and three quarters, the breadth 77 feet, and the extent of the cross-aisle $115\frac{1}{2}$.

pedition in the greatest floods ; a grand undertaking, which has been compleated upwards of a twelvemonth, and, undoubtedly, equals any thing of the kind : it extends from the new bridge to a little beyond a large wooden one placed upon the other (principal) stream of the Trent ; the distance above a mile and half. The whole is a continued series of bridges, among which, though I neglected to count a many, I observed some of 7, 9, 13, 15, and even 18 arches, neatly built of a good sort of brick, and all upon land ever dry except in hasty floods ; these permit the water to circulate and run off the more readily, and are, at the same time, so long as not to contract the width of the road.

From several of the hills about Newark are immense prospects over a plain which to the north, south, and south-west appears almost intirely boundless ; in particular, from that on which the first turnpike-house in the Ollerton road is situated, and that on which stands the corn-mills, are very fine views : Newark, with its castle and church, is seen beneath ; the city and cathedral of Lincoln appear distinctly at eighteen miles distance to the north ; whilst Belvoir castle, embosomed in wood, arises upon a majestic hill in the midst of the vale on the opposite

posite direction. Add to these objects two or three handsome seats *, numerous villages, the scattered, woody divisions of the pastures, and the winding course of the river, marked by unconnected sheets, and you will then allow the whole to be considerable in beauty as well as mere extent.

The country to Ollerton is all cultivated and pleasant in an eminent degree : in the neighbourhood of this town we begin to meet with small plantations of hops, and hereabouts are many woods, laid out, originally, in a pretty convenient manner ; for, several vistas (or ridings, as the people term them), intended for roads, are cut through each and meet in the centre.

Ollerton consists of a few brick houses, and has a weekly meeting, though (I believe) no charter for a market : the steeple and part of the church fell down several years ago, and are still permitted to continue in ruins ; as the bells were, therefore, taken away, the inhabitants are called to divine service by a man sent about the town tinkling a hand-bell.

* Viz. Kelham-hall, the residence of Lord George Sutton ;—a new white house near the Trent, below Newark ; &c.

A mile from hence is Rufford, a seat of that philanthropical and truly patriotic baronet, Sir George Saville. The house is a very large irregular building, erected on the scite of a monastery †. But the only object much worth viewing is a lake, not very extensive indeed, but very beautiful: it is supplied by a fine strong stream which, passing through, turns a corn-mill, a handsome edifice, at the lower end,—entering the lake at the upper in a manner that renders the whole perfectly natural: two or three little islands covered with shrubs and trees add prodigiously to the charms of the place, which is environed by lofty woods on three sides, and bounded on the other by a lawn, swelling immediately into a pretty tufted knole, and sinking to admit the passage of the gliding stream, which is crossed by an airy Chinese bridge. From the mill is a very retired pleasing walk through a shrubbery. The park is not wanting in woods of oak, and Sir George has planted many pines, which thrive well; he has also made several miles of road at his own expence, and converted a piece of marshy ground on his estate, at a few miles distance,

* Of which a small remaining part is connected with the edifice, but it is in contemplation to pull it down, and build a handsome front.

into

into another, a very large sheet of water, but its boundaries are unornamented.

Beyond Ollerton in Thoresby, the property of the duchess of Kingston. The main body of this house is a brick structure upon a rusticated basement of stone, and the middle of the basement-story also supports four fine Ionic columns, but, to the total violation of regularity, the offices are placed in a clutter all on one side of the principal building. The fine bending lake, or rather wide river, formed by enlarging a rapid brook, is above a mile long, adorned with two very handsome yachts, besides boats, and, in one place, has on its edge a row of small cannon for salutes. Here is also a model of a ship of war. The chapel, situated by an entrance of the park, is remarkably neat.

The land as far as Workfop, is chiefly open forest : at Carberton, in the road, is an iron-work ; there was another in this country, lately disused, and there is still one near Nottingham : these forges are scattered about at a distance from the mines where the ore is raised for the convenience of easily obtaining charcoal to supply them, and, perhaps, because the metal, when brought

brought hither, is on its road to water-carriage.

Upon revisiting the subterraneous navigation at Norwood, I found much matter of surprize in the expedition which has hitherto been used in the work. Though begun but in April 1772, though the workmen have been obstructed by water, and though stone is the chief substance raised, yet, notwithstanding these disadvantages, 1300 yards of the tunnel are finished and actually navigable towards the east end, and a considerable distance at the west, besides many parts between these in great forwardness, though yet unconnected, insomuch that it is expected the whole will be compleated by May next. The business is carried on (as usual) by sinking shafts, like those of a mine, at little distances (less than 100 yards, as I remember) from each other, in a straight course over the cut; by blasting or loosening the stone below with gunpowder, &c. and then drawing up that, coal, or whatever is met with, in the common manner. I expected some of these shafts would have been suffered to remain as ventilators to the canal, but was told that an introduction of fresh air by any other way than the mouths of the tunnel would be needless,

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and, indeed, this information seems to be verified by the part already compleated, for, as soon as the navigation was finished, the apertures in the arch were closed and the shafts all filled up. The depth beneath the surface at the highest point of hill is upwards of forty yards; the breadth of the tunnel about twelve feet, and (like that at Harecastle and the few other of this kind of works) it is arched, walled, and paved; with brick in some places, and in others with stone: there are to be doors at each entrance to shut up the arch in stormy weather, or when it may be esteemed necessary. A mile and half of the open cut, extending from that part of the tunnel which is already navigated, is also passable for the vessels: these vessels are upon the common construction of canal-boats, being extremely narrow and yet 69 feet long; the impossibility of their turning is remedied by the rudder, which hangs on at either end.

By the eastern mouth there is a quarry of fine stone, which is fortunately situated for a ready conveyance to other parts of the navigation; and, at a little distance, another, above the tunnel, with a crane, kept in a perpendicular position by ropes fastened to the sides of the hill;

hill*; by this machine the stone is lowered through the arch into boats beneath: bricks are made of the clay thrown out in sinking the shafts, and so are ready at hand to let down: in short, every article of the work is made to assist the others as much as possible, which (says a celebrated tourist) “is the grand art of œconomical management.”

But this stupendous navigable passage, though a mile and three quarters long (as I have reason to believe from repeated information obtained at this time), is not the only mark of immensity at Norwood; for, notwithstanding the tunnel preserves a surface of water level with the cut lying to the eastward, yet the case is not the same both ways, because, after the boats arrive at the western mouth they have still to go down a considerable portion of the declivity, and this descent could be effected by no other means than by a complication of locks; of these the four upper ones are in great forwardness, and to them is to be added thirteen more; in all, no less than seventeen locks adjoining.—What a view will all this form! How astonishing to the

* Like that of which Mr. Young has given a plate. See North Tour.

traveller upon the Rotherham road;—to see vessels coming as it were out of the mouth of a large oven (far under the surface of inclosures, varied with cattle and by people busied in their rustic employments), and then, after their emerging to day-light, to observe them descending extensive stairs; for what else can be called the seventeen steps down which they are to pass?—we shall almost be ready to believe the whole appearance an illusive vision †.

Most

† The present and anticipated scene of wonders struck me so forcibly as to occasion my growing poetical.

See the canal its placid face unveil,
 Contemn the storm, and court th' expanded sail;
 Its willing sail the vessel straightway rears,
 And a new look the wondering country wears;
 Meantime, the steersman, no more doom'd to brave
 The adverse current, or the dang'rous wave,
 Gladly resigns the tedious river's shore,
 Guides the still helm, and drops the needless oar;
 Trade for her sons abates her anxious fears,
 Slackens their toil, and spares their childrens tears.—
 Hills, rivers, woods, in vain a barrier fix
 To this—which scorns with other streams to mix,
 And mountains droop their stubborn heads so low
 That o'er their surface glides the pointed prow;
 Or if, ambitious, they uncheck'd dare rise,
 And boast their near connection with the skies,

Yet

Most of the open canal between Norwood and
Redford is compleated ||, together with several
locks

Yet still their pride receives a tort'ring wound,
Pierc'd their hard-heart, and bared their hidden ground.
The frighted sylvans too must feel the stroke,
Sinks the vast elm, and falls the sturdier oak ;
Yet falls a more exalted name to gain,
Now leagues with commerce, once but deck'd the plain.

See the heap'd vale its mighty mound extend !
See the proud aqueduct its arches bend !
Yon chasm behold, by delving labour made !
Yon tunnel long, that mock'd the feeble spade !
Where navigation, like a ship that's blown
To nameless lands, has found a track unknown, }
And, strange to tell! she moves through caves of stone :
Now step by step she from the hill descends,
Now fearless on th' aerial liquid wends,
Nor dreads the sliding passage from the steep,
Nor heeds th' abyfs, pre-eminently deep,
But passes careless o'er the devious course,
Smiles on industrious man, and drives the baneful horse.

Britain ! to thee these glorious works belong,
While Brindley claims a portion of the song,
Whose daring genius, as thy Shakespear's, came
From heav'n mature,—the darling heirs of fame !

Great

|| And in December was finished to that town, so as to supply it with coals.

locks and road-bridges of one brick (or sometimes stone) arch. The workmen suppose the whole undertaking † will require near three years to its completion. Wells with arches are provided in all necessary places for conveying brooks and superfluous water under the navigation ; as is instanced by a diminutive rill sunk beneath it near the head of the tunnel locks. Mr. Henshall, brother-in-law to the celebrated engineer who originally planned the work, has, since his decease, been the superior conductor.

If we were to consider such extensive projects as this before us in no other light than as honourable to the nation, they would, merely on that account, be deserving an eulogium : even the French who pretend to take the lead of every other people in invention have in these matters condescended not only to copy our

Great comprehensive soul, could none descry
Thy latent merit, save thy patron's * eye ?
In the lone spot obscured thy talents' worth,
Till worth congenial brought those talents forth :
—Let us with int'rest then the plaudit give,
And pay in praise what we in wealth receive.

* The Duke of Bridgewater.

† Being near 45 miles in length.

methods,

methods *, but also to employ our artists,—and if we come to add the principal advantage of these things, their utility, we must then allow them to be equal to most works of art in this or former ages. History informs us that Julius Cæsar employed his soldiers in mining a passage through a mountain for the purpose of draining a lake, but I believe our countrymen are the first who ever attempted to make such excavations subservient to navigation: their spirited designs shall not go unrewarded; for the works they have produced † shall remain, as long as time shall last, illustrious monuments of Brindley's genius and of Britain's opulence.

Near Norwood is Kiveton, a seat of the Duke of Leeds; the dwelling a large and very handsome modern building of brick ornamented with stone: at no great distance is a new white house, the property of Lord Holderness.

The country to Mansfield all in occupation and mostly inclosures; this town is large, but

* A subterraneous canal is now making in Picardy, in order to join the navigation of the rivers, Somme and Escaut.

† To use an imitation of an inscription at Blenheim-house.

very irregular; the inhabitants almost entirely maltsters and stocking-weavers; the market for corn, especially barley, very capital. Here, as at Nottingham, are some habitations cut out of the rock, rendered more singular by a road above them.

The nine miles from Mansfield to Ollerton totally forest, with a few cultivated spots on it, called brecks; these are designed more to improve the common for pasturage than for any advantage to be gained by the small product afforded: they are, accordingly, tilled for two or three years and then again laid open.

In this road, at Clipson, are a few remains of stone walls, said to be vestiges of a castle used by K. John, &c. as a hunting seat.

There is now but one wood (at least of any consequence) remaining on this vast royal demesne, and that is situated near Ollerton, but the venerable oaks in it, by the same *good* policy that prevails in managing the rest of our monarchical chases, are suffered to wither with age and decay unmolested, at a time too when the scarcity of ship-timber is an universal complaint: However, when a future generation, if
not

not a wiser, who, at least in many cases, make a better use of their wisdom, shall arise—it will be in their power to do for their successors what we have neglected doing for ours; the planting of forest-lands, and of all those which would yield but a small return to cultivation, will then be thought no greater difficulty to a whole nation than the filling up of vallies, carrying one river over another, and piercing others again through the interiors of a mountain—are at this day to a few individuals;—and, to instance only one, that the soil of *this* forest is proper for the produce of timber, the woods wherewith it was covered formerly, and the present thriving plantations of several gentlemen on its borders, must be esteemed an indisputable testimony.

Passing again through Newark on to the Sleaford road, you rise the summit of that elevated down where are the windmills (mentioned, with others, before, for its fine landscapes), and find for the next seven miles a flat dull country, which is almost intirely newly-inclosed fields;—at that distance, reach Leadenham, and mounting its lofty hill have another of those amazing vale-prospects which for extent are seldom equalled: this, however, has fewer beauties than them nearer to the Trent.

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It may be proper to add that this hill is one in a long ridge or chain which abruptly bound Lincoln heath, &c. to the westward; first ascending in the south near Grantham, and continuing, without the intermission of more than two vallies, several miles beyond Lincoln northerly. A series of villages upon their summits is known by the appellation of the Cliff-row. The views commanded from them are in general as little circumscribed as that of Leadenham.

Inclosures upon the heath hereabouts are making a rapid progress, and population will not be the worse for some new farm-houses scattered among them: in short, we may observe that ours is not only the age of inclosure, but that Lincolnshire seems to be the favourite haunt of this deity (whose sovereign power of transformation is now so universally acknowledged), as its footsteps appear in every part of that extensive county.

Proceeding over the heath, found it now almost intirely inclosed all the way to Lincoln; from the hill before we descend to that city a large tract of low land is commanded, at this time so flooded as to appear like a great intricate bay of
the

the ocean, inclosing innumerable islands and promontories ; many wooded : a prospect which might, perhaps, be accounted pleasant by those who were ignorant that its beauty was connected with the temporary destruction of the country.

The repair of Lincoln minster is now finished in so complete a manner, that it is not too high an encomium to say that the inside may vie in neatness with that of any cathedral whatever. The new Gothic altar-piece of masonry is surprisingly light and ornamental, happily coinciding with the rest of this airy and elegant building ; the capitals of the pillars, and the plentiful decorations in carving throughout the vast pile, are extremely rich ; the former ornamented with a kind of foliage not unlike the Corinthian. Among the various enrichments of the outside are some whimsical bas-reliefs expressive of a monkish fancy,—groups of human figures intermixed with serpents and devils, a *caricature* of Noah's ark, &c.

Leaving Lincoln, I proceeded along the barren, neglected, and, now, dismal country which had before presented such a sea-like view ; saw water stretching to the eye on each side ; every little stream overflowing its borders ; the Wi-

tham on both sides Lincoln, the foss-dyke, &c. —all spreading over the meadows; whilst the hedges between them, peeping above water, marked to the occupiers the situation of their desolated fields. The lands (four miles on this side Torksey) mentioned in my former tour as useless, like this country in general, though inclosed, are yet suffered for the most part to remain uncultivated: one cannot help inquiring, to what purpose was the general inclosure meant?

Arriving at Torksey, observed that, that irritable river, the Trent had broke in broad sheets over its fertile vale for many miles: — the country to Gainsborough much better than that already passed, not so flat, more peopled, and cultivated though not perfectly drained: passed, in this road, Burton Hall, a neat house admirably situated for commanding a fine prospect of the vale and reaches of the Trent.

Gainsborough is a considerable trading town, the streets narrow but not ill-built, and being all new paved are remarkably clean; the church is a handsome modern structure adorned on the outside with Tuscan pilasters, the steeple ancient, a Gothic tower. The place possesses twelve ships of 140 tons each upon an average (with
some

some others in hire), besides sloops and small craft : a few of the larger vessels are sent annually up the Streights and Baltic, but the most are freighted with pottery, hard-ware, and other goods brought down the Trent, for London, from whence they return with groceries, &c. The river here is deep, but, by its narrowness for many miles, must surely be a tedious passage for ships of burden : the warehouses are so conveniently situated that vessels lay their sides close to them and deliver their cargoes without trouble.

At Stockwith, three miles lower, several merchant-vessels are built ; one of about 100 tons had been launched a few days before I was there. When the freshes are very low the highest spring tides rise near twelve feet, but in time of floods are often unable to flow up hither : the eager or first coming of the tide in this river is curious, the violent opposition between that and the downward current raises a furious bank of water often five feet high, and sometimes so impetuous as to drive ships from their moorings.—The Chesterfield canal is to terminate in the Trent at this village.—Potatoes are cultivated in abundance along the whole eastern boundary of the river below Gainsborough ;

rough; and, in particular, at Butterwick and the neighbouring villages a very great proportion of the soil is applied to their produce : vast quantities of these roots are shipped for other parts of the kingdom :—The low land on the other side of the river is no less remarkable for its cheese.

I crossed the Trent at Stockwith and travelled (for the advantage of good road, on the Bawtry turnpike as far as the first toll-bar), mostly through open fields, to Retford ; here I visited the navigation, which had just reached this place, and walked along its edge near two miles : the objects of curiosity in that short distance are these. First, a handsome brick bridge at the end of the street leading toward Worktop, the arch pretty large, sufficiently so to admit both the canal and towing-path under it : just below this bridge a lock is begun, after descending which, the navigation is to be carried for a furlong or more on a mound of earth and an aqueduct across the valley and river Idle : this, when completed, must exhibit a striking appearance :—but, advancing westward, we next meet with a valley banked across, for about the distance of 150 yards ; the canal on the top is so much narrower than usual that two boats
cannot

cannot pass each other ; thus contrived in order that the pressure of water may be too inconsiderable to break down or injure the mound : below, a pretty large brook is conveyed under the navigation by means of an arch. Further on, another brick bridge is building ; beyond this a lock, and at a little distance another : the locks are of a great length (proportioned to the boats), are all seven feet two inches broad, universally built of brick capped with stone, and, if I may trust my memory, raise the water about four feet each. The most general breadth of the canal at top is 36 feet, but in some places 28 and in others only $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet at bottom, varying according to the depth, regulated by an even or unequal surface.

Inclosing is hitherto but little practised in Nottinghamshire ; however Retford field is now under partition. Here is land enough that stands in need of such an improvement, but sound policy would have begun with the wastes and commons (all much richer in soil than Lincoln-heath), not with corn-fields. — I returned through the town and proceeded towards Dunham ferry, the country thither agreeable, mostly old inclosures.—Had in this ride one extensive view, and observed that the stones

on a little common were a porous granulated concrete, very much resembling the petrifications of Matlock :—again ferry over the Trent, and soon after fall into the Torksey road to Lincoln, on that disagreeable country before mentioned.

I passed through this city to Navenby, a small market town, and there descended again into the flat, for the purpose of viewing Somerton castle*; of this one of the round corner towers, the only remaining part, is kept in good repair; being joined to a very large farm-house: the size of the latter, with the moats and banks around, makes it still preserve in appearance somewhat of its ancient dignity. Not much above half a mile to the S. W. of Somerton is the ruin of a square tower, called now Skinnand castle; one side and little more is yet standing. I recollect no mention of it in any description or history.—The country all around is new inclosures.

From hence I shaped my retrograde course, through some of the places mentioned before, to Holbeach, a tolerably neat little town in

* Built (or, as some historians say, only rebuilt) by Anthony Beck, bishop of Durham, in the year 1305.

the S. E. angle of this county, and, passing over the famous grazing parishes of long Sutton, &c. soon after arrived at Wisbeach. A considerable trade is carried on here by means of the river, though barges and small sloops alone can get up, the larger vessels stopping at Cross-keys Wash-way, about six miles below : much corn is shipped, and a considerable quantity of oil, there being several (I think seven) mills at this town for pressing it from the seed. The buildings are in general handsome, the inn we stopped at uncommonly so ; the market place ornamented with an obelisk ; but the bridge stretching rialto-like over this straight and considerable stream, with a row of good houses extending from it and fronting the water to a considerable distance, beats all, and exhibits something of a *Venetian* appearance, especially if viewed from the London entrance. This vast arch is modern, is—feet span *, of stone, and crowned with a handsome balustrade and lamps. The country round Wisbeach is low, watery, and more dreary than the Lincolnshire fens, the high land being further removed from the sight, and, in consequence, the eye

* Between 70 and 90 ; I think I have been told 76.

having no prospect of a happier country, no more agreeable resting place than that immediately before it, becomes satiated with a sameness which, besides being in itself disagreeable, appears to have no end, nor to lead to future enjoyment.

Most of the way to St. Ives continues woodless and unvaried, cultivated and profitable; the farms are generally large, the farmers industrious, and, notwithstanding the frequent losses by floods, and by rainy weather in time of harvest, several rich. Indeed, I have often heard that the temple of riches is soonest attained by *dirty ways*, and we all know that *muddiness* to some men proves no obstacle.

The villages of this country are few, but what there are we find large and populous.

Within the thirty-two miles before mentioned the only market-town is Merch, and even this is a place that has no great title to eminence; it has many paltry and some neat brick buildings; the parish contains about fifteen hundred people, but of these I know not how many may live in the town,

St. Ives

St. Ives is not inconsiderable, yet is of note for nothing but its great markets for cattle: here is an old bridge over the Ouse; the river is capital, but as much cannot be said of the buildings, they are rather below than above mediocrity.

Here, after a journey of seventy miles upon a dead flat (viz. from near Sleaford to this town), I once more entered on a different country, a country that became more varied and pleasing on arriving at the very agreeable county of Hertford, in some parts of which the swift descent of the slopes, and the plentiful accompaniment of wood which often bespreads them, forms pretty picturesque scenes, retired and striking, though seldom very august or romantic.

Roylton, which I next came to, is a large town; many of the houses plaistered, but in general tolerably uniform:—Buntingford is a small place;—Ware of a size between both, neat, and pleasantly situated,—and Hodsdon somewhat smaller than the latter.

The seventeen miles from Hodsdon to Shore-ditch is almost a continued street of good houses

or handsome villas of the citizens; these, while they create a crowded confusion in the landscape, give a sketch of the luxury of the age, and of the opulence of this immense city, the most favoured emporium of commerce, the metropolis of the modern world!

F I N I S.



